

A New Tradition: Portland, Indiana

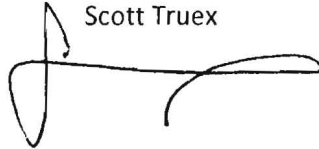
**An Honors Thesis (LA 404)**

**By**

Catherine Schmidt

**Thesis Advisor**

Scott Truex

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Truex', with a stylized, elongated horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Ball State University  
Muncie, Indiana**

May 2011

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May 2011

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# Abstract

The main focus of this project is to examine the opportunities Portland, Indiana has for community development and for improvement in the areas of physical activity, sense of community, and economic sustainability. I will look at the assets already present in the area and opportunities to bring new resources to the community. The study will focus on Meridian Street and Main Street, creating a master plan and streetscape design for the area around these two streets downtown Portland.



Thank you to God for His grace, strength and love,  
my family for supporting me, and  
my friends for putting up with my craziness  
during my busyness.

A special thank you to my grandparents, John and Gretchen Young, for their encouragement and participation in connecting me to the community throughout this project.

Also a special thank you to all the community members that gave input and information about Portland: Vicki Tague, Tom and Joyce Young, Becca James, Doug Inman, Emily Roberts, Jane Spencer, Joe Jarzen, Christy Corle, the Portland Historic Preservation Commission and the Jay County Historical Museum.





# A New Tradition: Portland, Indiana



Proposed Transformation at Main and Ship, North of the Jail



Current Condition





# A New Tradition: Portland, Indiana

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4.29.2011



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*"I believe very strongly that the cities that pay attention—really pay attention—to quality of life will be the cities that thrive in the twenty-first century.... Trees, flowers, a small park, even a sidewalk bench can soften the rough edges of a city, calm your nerves and make you feel a little more in control of things...[Parks] are essential buildings blocks of strong neighborhoods." Mayor Daley, Chicago*



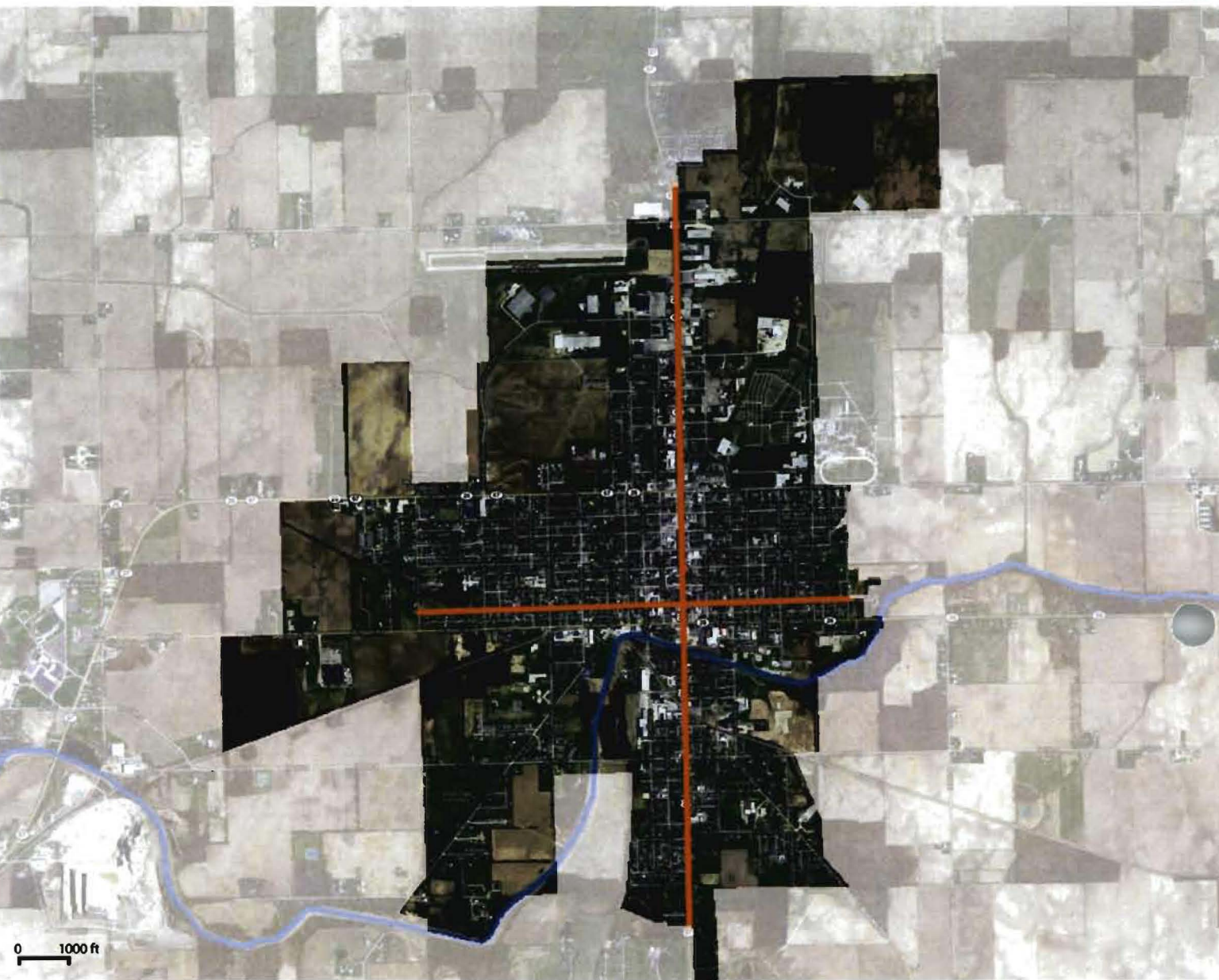
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# Portland City Limits



# Introduction



Jay County, Indiana

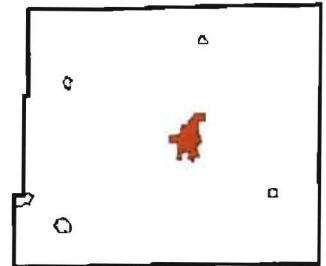
The town of Portland, Indiana—the county seat of Jay County—is a place with a rich history with beautiful buildings dating before the 1890s. It is also a town that looks toward the future with hope, planning and striving to improve the quality of life of citizens. As a vibrant community,

Portland attracts people from all over the county and beyond for shopping and utilities. U.S. Route 67 brings traffic from Muncie, Anderson and Indianapolis, and U. S. routes 26 and 27 bring travelers through the historic downtown district, which boasts a movie theater and the county courthouse. Downtown is more of a pass-through than a destination for travelers. Unfortunately some of the beautiful historic buildings are covered up with vinyl or are run down. This does not represent the town well and does not encourage citizens to care for their own

properties. This proposal will address the issues of the busy road and need for beautification.

Portland experienced a visioning process in 2009 and 2010 where committees formed to provide direction and future guidance to Jay County. These committees compiled goals for the county and came up with a plan to achieve those goals. While there are some movers and shakers who are motivated to improve the quality of life of the citizens in the community, there are also some who know little about the town where they live and are not inclined to get involved.

The mission of this proposal is to bring both kinds of people together to stimulate pride for their community. I attempt to assist in this by suggesting aesthetic and economic improvements that encourage a healthy lifestyle for the community of Portland, Indiana.



Portland, Jay County

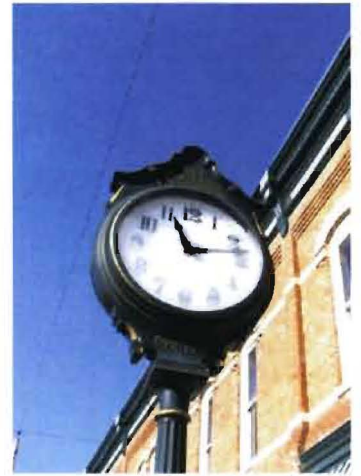




# Significance

The point of this project is to improve the positive community atmosphere and enhance the quality of life for the community members. Recently a survey—taken in conjunction with the *Jay County 20/20 Vision*—showed that over half of Jay County residents feel they lack access to knowledge of government happenings (Civic Index Survey Results). When people know what is going on in their community they are more likely to get involved. 65% of respondents said that the community did not have a shared vision or goal for the future. Portland needs direction and unity. With more opportunities for interaction through an increased number of quality public spaces, the residents of Portland would become better acquainted with their neighbors and be more likely to support the community as a whole. The United Health Foundation (UHF) suggests that one of the seven principles for a healthy community is to “Connect People and Resources.” When people are familiar with their fellow citizens and surroundings, they realize the opportunities and resources that are around them. Another UHF principle mentions that creating “a shared set of values and behavior standards, neighborliness, an acknowledgement of interdependence, and a commitment to the common good help[s] create a sense of community” (United Health Foundation). If a group of people are in communion with each other they are more likely to look out for one another and therefore participate in civic activities.

Individual health has many facets: mental, physical, emotional and spiritual. This plan endeavors to create a well-rounded, healthy individual. With many healthy individuals in a town, it will create a healthy, well-rounded community. In a study done in California with school children a positive correlation was found between physical fitness and school test scores (See Appendix F, California Department of Education, 2). When children are active, their parents are more likely to be active and outdoors. With this plan, physical activity will increase because people will enjoy being outside in the improved streetscape, parks and community. Obesity will decrease with people spending more time outdoors and this increase in physical activity will reduce the stress levels of the users of the parks and trails, creating a more pleasant atmosphere in households of Portland.



Portland Foundation Clock  
on East Main





# Problem Statement



Statue outside of the Arts  
Place on East Main

I will work with Portland, Indiana to help revitalize the underutilized downtown Main Street community that is not reaching its full potential, as well as increase the overall health of the community that is currently somewhat disjointed. I will develop a street plan and master community plan that will help bring about these economic, social and physical improvements.

## Sub Problems:

What makes a community healthy , physically and economically?

How can health aspects be integrated into the master plan?

What streetscape and downtown amenities would revitalize this community's well-being?

What does Portland need to revitalize their downtown Main Street community?





# Goals and Objectives

The mission of this project is to inspire, empower and aid the residents of Portland, Indiana to become a healthy and economically viable community, encouraging one another to lead healthier lives.

Improve physical fitness of all citizens of Portland, Indiana.

- Redevelop the current **pedestrian infrastructure**.
- Add new **bicycle paths** throughout the community.

Foster community pride in Portland, Indiana.

- Create well-designed **public gathering areas**.
- Celebrate the **heritage and culture** of Portland.

Economically revitalize the Meridian Street and Main Street corridors.

- **Infill** vacant buildings with vibrant new businesses and amenities.
- Improve the **aesthetics** of the Meridian Street and Main Street corridors.
- Introduce enhancements in the **streetscapes**.

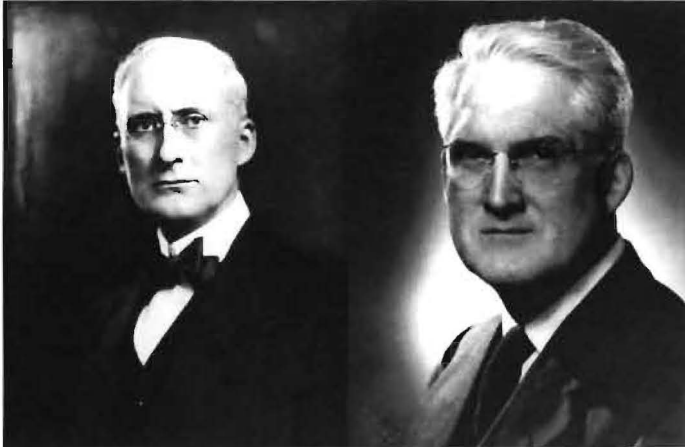




# Rich Heritage and Culture

Portland has a rich heritage and culture which is a great asset that should be built upon. There is character and a unique feel about the town that is yearning to be expressed in the design of the downtown Historic District. The natural gas boom

Elwood Haynes was born in Portland in 1857 and attended Jay County public schools. After attending college in Massachusetts, he returned to Portland where he taught and eventually became the principal at Portland High School. When the



James P. and Pierre F. Goodrich Photo from Dane Starbuck in Indiana started in 1886 when Henry Sees found natural gas near Portland, Indiana. Natural gas helped Portland become a city. The Goodrich brothers took advantage of this discovery and started a gas company. They invested in public utilities in East Central Indiana and contributed to the development of Portland.



Elwood Haynes in his first horseless carriage, 1894 Photo from Library of Congress

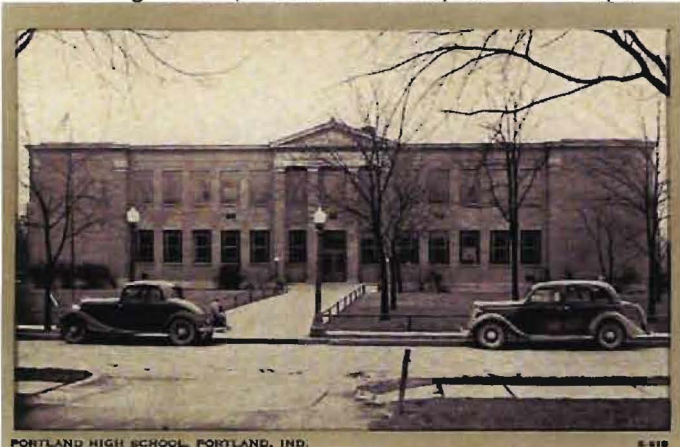
gas boom began, Haynes became superintendent for the Portland Natural Gas and Oil Company. He later invented one of the first horseless carriages, among many other things.

Another Portland native is Twyla Tharp, a well-known choreographer, who has choreographed dances for five movies and four Broadway shows. She has choreographed over 135 dances to date.

Twyla Tharp Photo from Twyla Tharp—Bio



Portland High School, where Elwood Haynes was Principal



# Review of Literature

## A Healthy Community: Physically and Economically

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), healthy community design is “planning and designing communities that make it easier for people to live healthy lives.” Such a design could make places in the community easier to access by walking or biking, therefore reducing the dependence on cars. A healthy community design would encourage habits of social interaction and physical activity, which would in turn increase mental and physical health. It also would accommodate the changes of life that come with aging that would allow a person to live in one place for their lifetime. These aspects of a healthy community would apply to Portland already as they recently developed a senior living community connected to the Jay County Hospital. This is an example of how Portland is already improving the quality of life for some senior members of the community. The many benefits the CDC brings to light would improve the downtown district of Portland by increasing the physical activity of residents, improving air quality, reducing the risk of injury, and raising the sense of community awareness and social interaction, as well as reducing the effects on climate change. Designing with all of these principles in mind will be an important challenge for the town.

A community is healthy economically when it is able to support local retail businesses. Therefore, in Portland, some businesses must be located in the downtown historic district. Entrepreneurs



This was the first Jay County Courthouse. Unfortunately it was demolished in 1918.

need to see the benefits to the community of establishing their businesses downtown as opposed to an outlying commercial district. By increasing the aesthetic appeal of the streets, owners will realize the potential for their business. Bringing back the historic character of the town will give the area a unique flair that will attract visitors and out-of-town customers. This can be done by improving the facades of existing buildings and creating an attractive unity around the buildings in downtown as vibrant businesses move back to the Main and Meridian Street area.

Portland realistically could improve the old buildings on Meridian Street and Main Street as tax credits are available for historic rehabilitation projects. Historic preservation projects created over 58,000 jobs in the U.S. in 2008 (The Historic Tax Credit Coalition). These projects support the economy in the community where the preservation is taking place because local contractors and laborers are hired. This stimulates



the local economy in many areas where family incomes are below the median. Two-thirds of the projects since 2002 were in communities where the income is below 80% of median income. In 2008 the estimated income for Jay County was at 87% of the state median income (ERS). But between 2008 and 2009 the unemployment rate in Jay County nearly doubled which in turn lowered the average household income, making Portland prime material for eligibility for historic preservation tax credits (ERS).

### Tools to Make It Happen

One focus area that addresses many of the health principles is transportation. If walking and biking options were made available, transportation would shift away from automobile dependence and physical activity would increase. In the United States, only 13% of trips to school are taken by walking or biking, while 55% use individual vehicles (Wendel). Wendel continued to report that less than half of the children close to school walked or biked. This is representative of the country, but the condition can be improved by designing for a more active lifestyle. In a high walkability neighborhood, houses are closer together, there is more connectivity between amenities, and more variety of land use in a given area. This brings about twice the amount of walking in these well-designed communities than in low walkability neighborhoods (Khan). The design of a community can greatly impact the habits of the residents. If a woman walks ten blocks a day, her risk of cardiovascular disease drops 33% (Urban Sprawl and Public Health). By walking her children to school and back, a resident in a walkable community could cut her risk of heart disease by a



This zebra cross-walk in Glendale, California is an appropriate example of how to provide safe pedestrian crossing of a busy road.

third. Citizens have a huge responsibility to support design that provides opportunities for healthy lifestyles.

Glendale, California, near Los Angeles, addressed pedestrian accessibility. They looked at how to create a safer environment for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic around busy intersections. They created large, zebra cross-walks to slow cars (seen above).

By installing medians, pedestrians can enjoy simplicity when it comes to crossing the street. With a "Pedestrian Median Refuge" the citizens are able to focus on one direction of traffic at a time (Glendale Safe and Healthy Streets Plan). This creates a safer environment for the street-crosser.

Creating bike lanes in the existing right-of-way is often an option. Main Street and Meridian Street, in Portland, are plenty wide to implement a plan like that of Glendale. The combination of crosswalks, medians, bike lanes, sidewalks, curb extensions and street trees create an overall healthy street, encouraging active lifestyles.



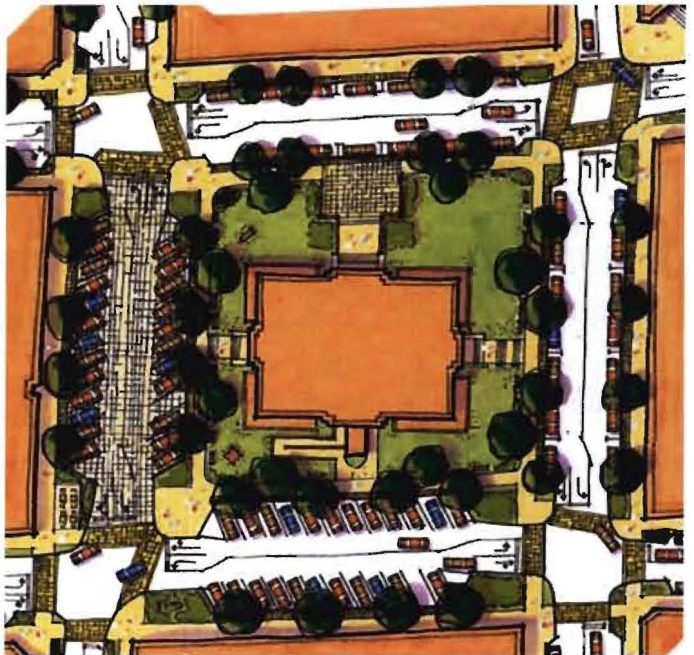
This median in a four lane highway in Glendale, California gives pedestrians a chance to look for traffic. With a median crossers only need to be cautious of one direction of traffic at a time.

Portland is taking steps toward a more walkable community and plans are being discussed for connecting bike trails and walking paths to the hospital, where they have already created a walking trail, and to Walmart. This thinking that has started will be beneficial for future development of Portland's safe pedestrian system.

Winchester, Tennessee is a town much like Portland, Indiana. It is the county seat of Franklin County with 7,876 residents in 2009. The town received a grant from the state for a tax rebate zone. Architects did façade repair/replacement designs for all buildings in downtown Winchester and they redesigned the courthouse square on which the entire downtown is centered. There is currently an abundance of pavement, which would be redesigned into a courthouse lawn and parking for businesses. Two highways go through the center of downtown Winchester, much like Portland. They address the traffic issue by bumping-out the sidewalks at intersections and providing parallel as well as pull-in parking. These traffic-calming techniques will make pedestrians

feel welcome and safe. Such façade improvements and courthouse square concepts would do well if applied to downtown Portland.

Another tool contributing to a district's community health in many ways, is the establishment of neighborhood community gardens. Community gardens are plots of land that are divided into small sections for gardeners to grow produce or flowers. Aside from the health benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables, such community gardens bring a sense of pride and togetherness. The gardens bring out the giving side of a person and spark volunteerism and hope. In 1998 Kuo found that in a downtown environment, when a barren space is converted into a green space, 90% more people use the space and 83% more residents engage in social activities. People want to get involved in helping out the community and to



The Winchester courthouse square was redesigned to give visitors a lawn and a festival space.

improve aesthetic appearance (Kuo). This social health brings back vitality and a sense of caring to a neighborhood.



Portland is already starting to see the benefits of community gardens and hopes to see continued and increased benefits going forward. The summer of 2010 was the first year for the community gardens located behind the Jay County Hospital. There are currently 60 plots, all of which were occupied in the first year of this program. This popular endeavor could be broadened to the downtown neighborhoods. Developing vacant lots with community gardens could provide downtown residents with gardens just across the street from home.

A neighborhood community garden would also help to realize a majority of the seven “SafeScape” Principles, from Brennan and Zelinka’s book SafeScape, by promoting “Interaction and Socialization”, “Ownership and Stewardship”, “Landuse and Design”, “Activity and Programming” and “Management and Maintenance.” Following these principles would make the downtown neighborhood safer and would unify the residents. Community gardens in the historic district of Portland would encourage “interaction and socialization” and provide “activity and programming”. The neighbors who work in the garden will be outside working throughout the season and will interact with and communicate with each other. Those gardens would also promote “ownership and stewardship” while encouraging “management and maintenance” because gardeners have to take care of their own plot and therefore become invested in the land and that space in the neighborhood. They will consequently feel a better connection to the area as a whole. By applying the “Landuse and Design” principle with better use of space in a



Community garden in the High Point Community in near Portland, OR.

neighborhood, residents would feel that the place has a purpose and would feel safer.

### **Master Plan of Health**

Parks are the life blood of a community. They provide places for people to exercise, play, meet, socialize, and hold community gatherings. Big or small they have a large impact on the operations of a town. Sugiyama and her colleagues with the American Public Health Association studied what specifically in a park encourages people to walk. They looked at aesthetics, size and location and which of these affected the residents’ walking habits. They found that there is a positive correlation between aesthetics and appearance and the number of people who walk. The more aesthetically pleasing a park, the more people want to spend time there walking and playing. The best kind of park is large and attractive. The larger the space, the better, but Sugiyama suggests that if there is no space to build a large park in established neighborhoods, upgrading and revitalizing the current open spaces would have a positive impact on the quality of life. In Portland, there are spaces on vacant lots and in current parking lot areas that would serve as great parks.

The town has begun adding parks including a new one, Freedom Park, on Meridian Street next to the Salamonie River. The parks, however, need to be well supervised and well lit to ensure safety. If the public spaces are adjacent to houses and apartments, those residents will be natural supervisors of the area. Teens especially, often enjoy congregating in such spaces, and parks could offer programming where teens have more of a purpose for being there. Parents will feel better about letting their teenager hang out with their friends at the park or in town where there is good visibility.

Portland needs a highly programmed park in the downtown historic district. This may involve adding a new park or improving amenities offered at the existing parks in the vicinity.

### **Portland is Preparing**

The Portland Foundation was the second community foundation formed in the state and boasts one of the largest per capita assets in Indiana. In 2009 and 2010, the Portland Foundation sponsored a county-wide development vision called “Jay County 20/20 Vision.” The 20/20 Vision suggests goals in the areas of economic development, education, health, wellness and recreation, and quality of life, and committees were formed in each of these areas (Jay County, 12). The final report shares what the committees believe Jay County needs in order to continue the vitality of community life in the county and to promote new development. It is important to examine the areas that the community really wants to improve and where they want to focus their development efforts. The report includes



New walking path in Hudson Park.

strategies to reach goals in each focus area. I will build on what they have started in hopes of furthering their efforts by developing some of those strategies already laid out.



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# Methodology

In gathering information about Portland, I used a variety of techniques. I looked at the history of the town at the Jay County Historical Museum. I used these resources to learn about the heritage of Portland and what has already been done. This also helped me learn what kind of atmosphere and aesthetic should be celebrated. A member of the Historical Museum sent me historic maps and aerial photos from the museum archives and I acquired current maps and aerials online from Google Earth and Bing online.

I talked to business owners along my site path of Main Street and Meridian Street. I asked them about their experiences owning a business along these corridors. I also talked with people in the Jay County Historic Commission about the history of the county and the positives and negatives of the area. I spent time with Portland natives who have lived in the town for their entire lives. They were able to tell me stories about the town and they had opinions of what should happen on the site.

I observed the activity of the Portland historic district area and I took inventory of the state of the site. I was able to assess the condition of the buildings, parking lots and the vacant areas and observed the traffic patterns by walking around the site.

I spent time on the project site and with people who will use the spaces affected by the design. I got to know the people and experience some of what they experience in the Historic District of Portland, Indiana.

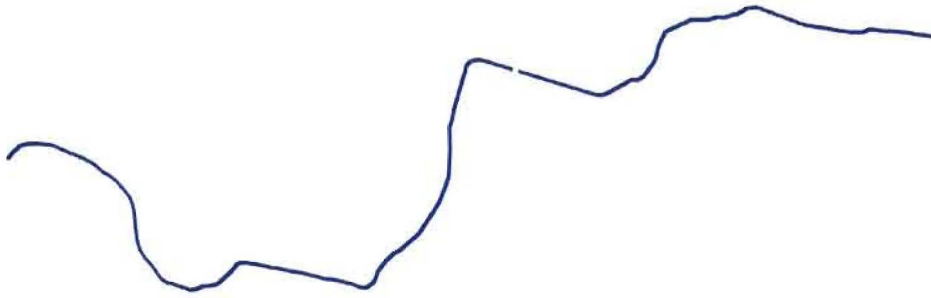


Jay County Historical Museum, Located at 903 East Main  
Photo from [jaycountyhistory.org](http://jaycountyhistory.org)

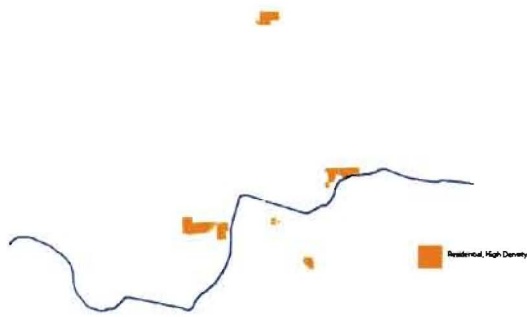




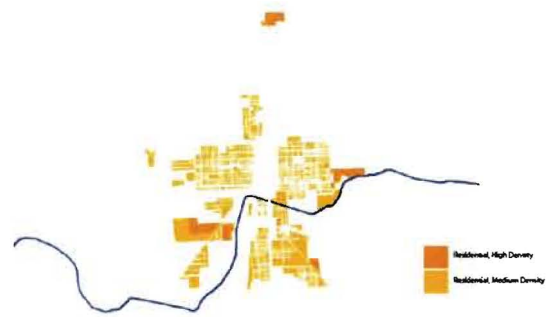
# The Story



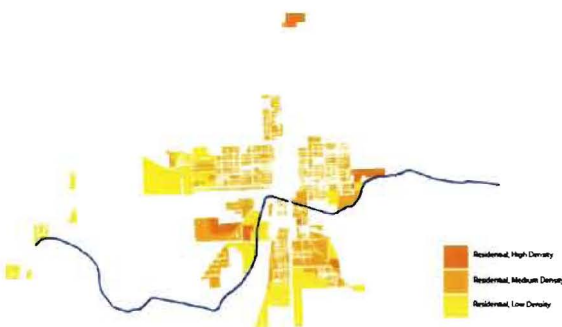
It started with a river...



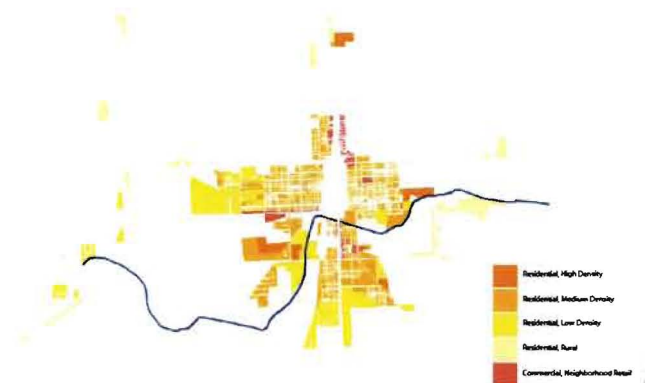
...then high density residential...



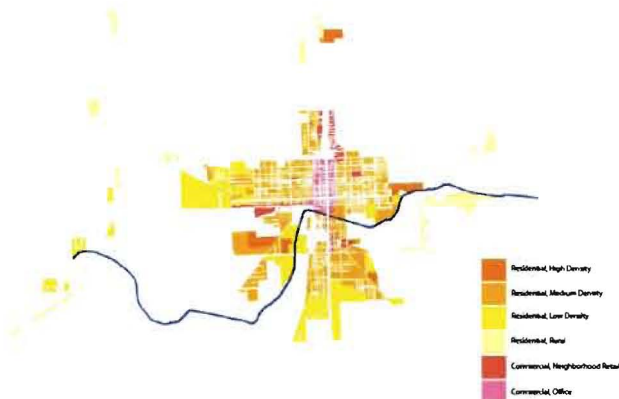
...then medium density residential...



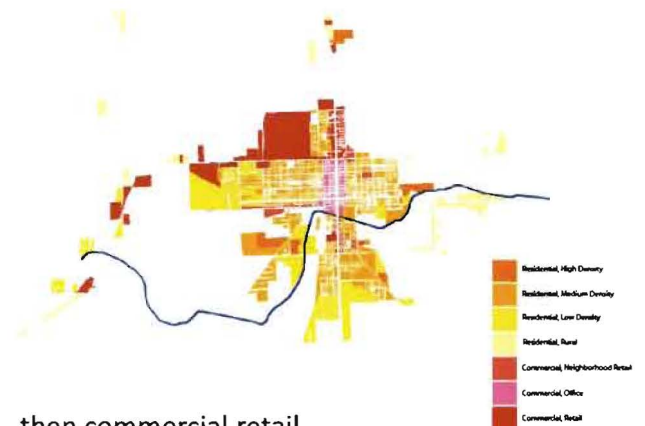
...then low density residential...



...then neighborhood businesses...



...then offices...

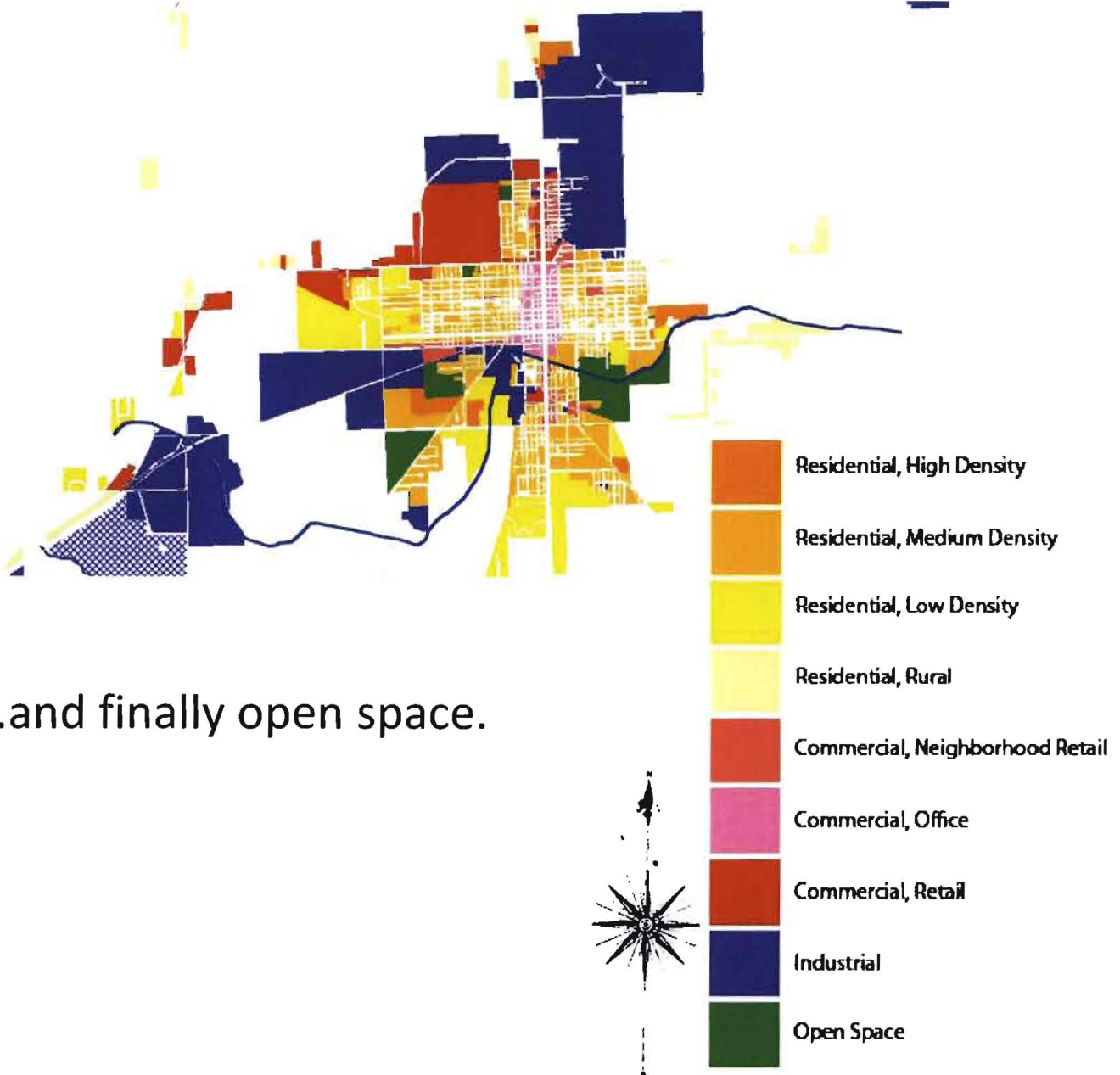
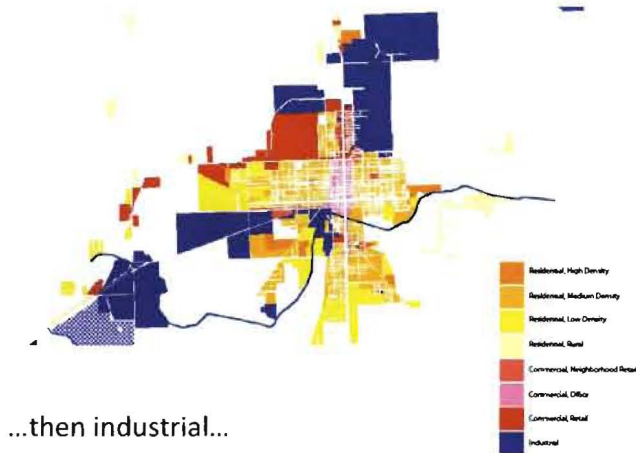


...then commercial retail...

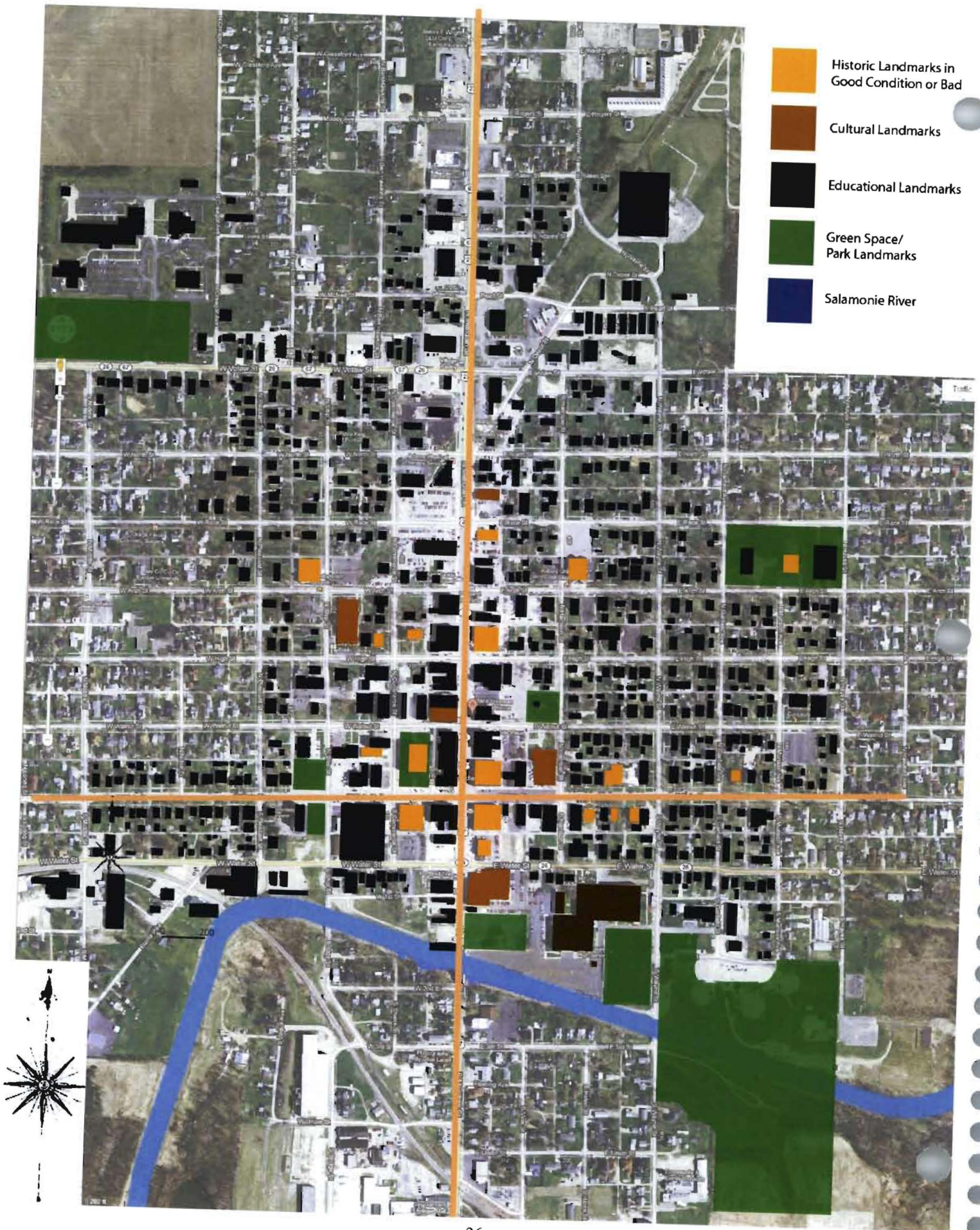
The core of downtown Portland is comprised of commercial office space. There is little retail space and few restaurants. The residential density surrounding the core office district is only medium density residential. This low residential density does not keep people downtown at all times. Bringing higher density residential development to the downtown core would liven

the space and make it safer by making more eyes on downtown. Commercial retail development would also bring people to the area outside of business hours. Since the retail core is outside the historic district, the evening life and shopping happens away from the center of town. There exists the opportunity to bring stores and restaurants to Meridian Street and Main Street.

# The Story









# Landmarks

In downtown Portland there are a variety of landmarks that support the community. Religious and public buildings, homes, streets and event locations categorize the type of historic landmarks present.

Walnut and Meridian—the building on the right was an Opera House and now it is the Ritz Movie theater



Photos by Becca James from top to bottom: First Presbyterian Church, Floral Hall at Jay County Fairgrounds, Tractor and Engine Show Parade, Cart Races at Jay County Fairgrounds

Detamore House and Elks Lodge, Corner of High and Commerce





Coca-Cola Plant, now the Museum of the Soldier, Arch



Intersection of Main Street and Meridian Street looking West



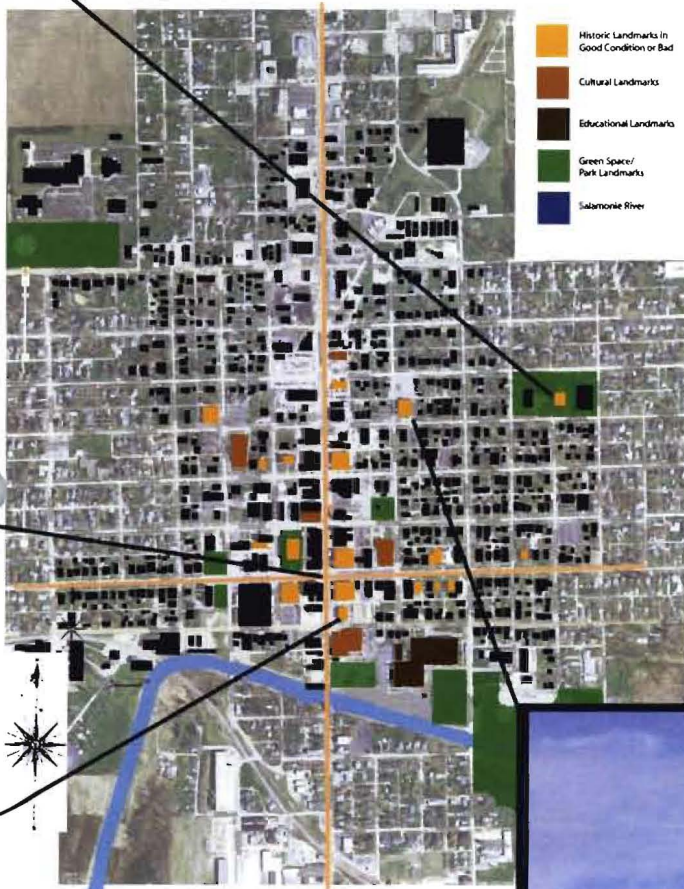
Post Office, Northeast corner of Meridian Street and Water Street



# Landmarks

The many historic landmarks around downtown Portland make for a rich tapestry of culture. These few gems shown here are just a drop in the bucket of the great buildings downtown. These buildings are many and great, but they are not connected

and the space around the buildings do not give the buildings justice. It is said that the diamond is only as good as its setting. With a new setting these historic gems will sparkle as they should.

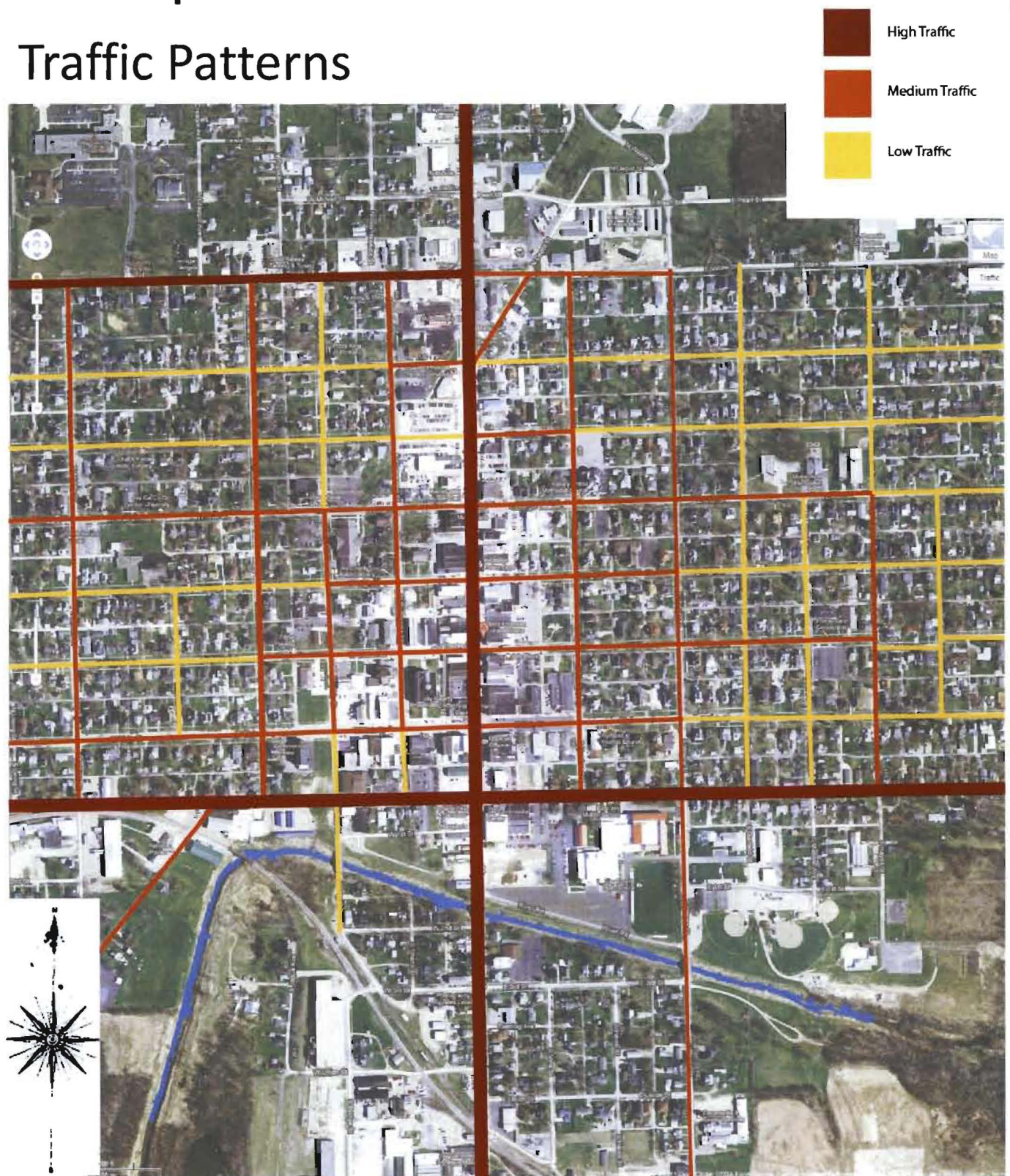


Asbury United Methodist Church, Arch Street



# Transportation

## Traffic Patterns



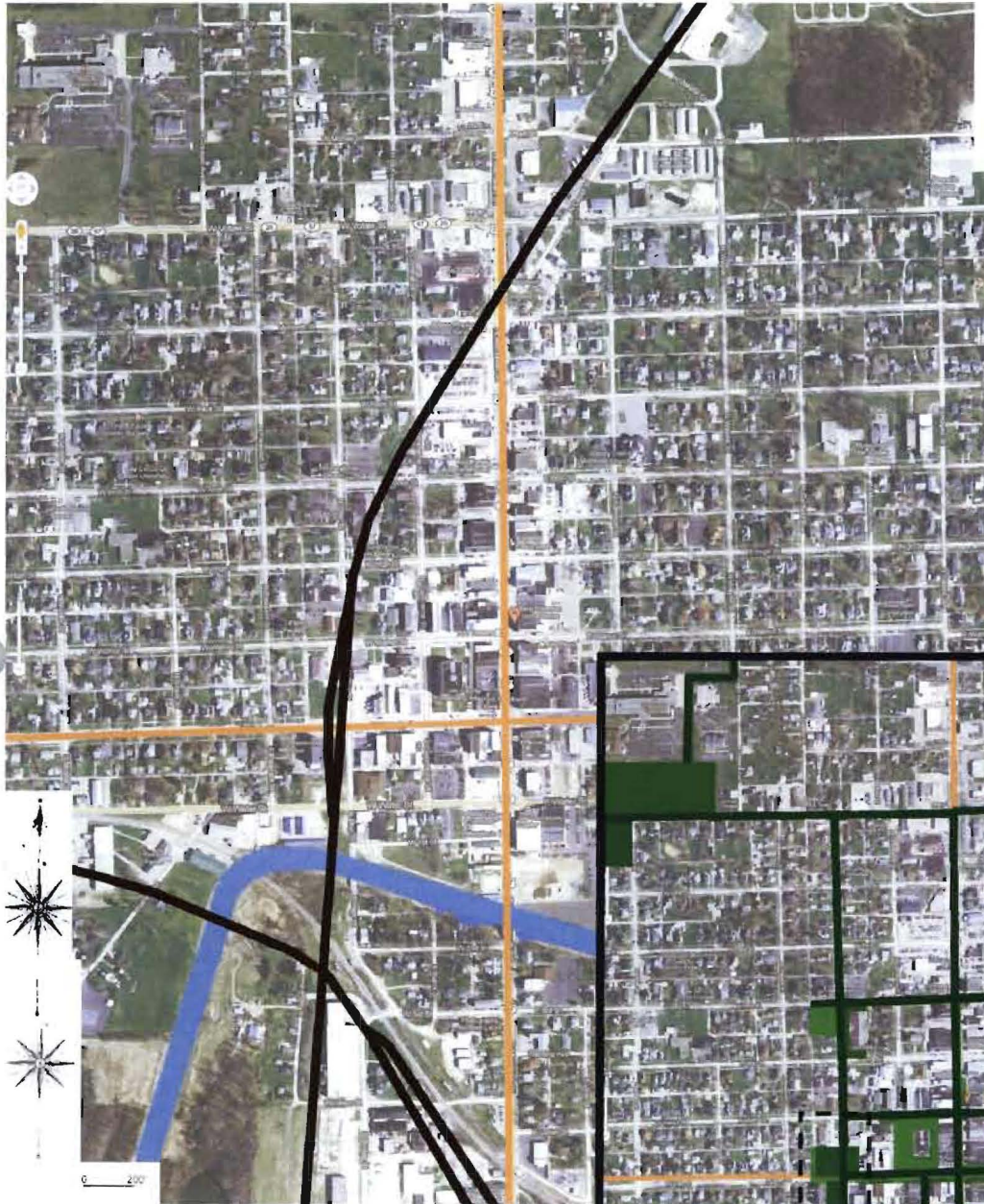
Traffic comes into downtown on State Route 67 from Muncie, Anderson and Indianapolis. State Road 27 travels North/South on Meridian Street

down to Richmond and up to Decatur. State Road 26 travels East/West connecting Hartford City to the west and Fort Recovery to the east.



# Transportation

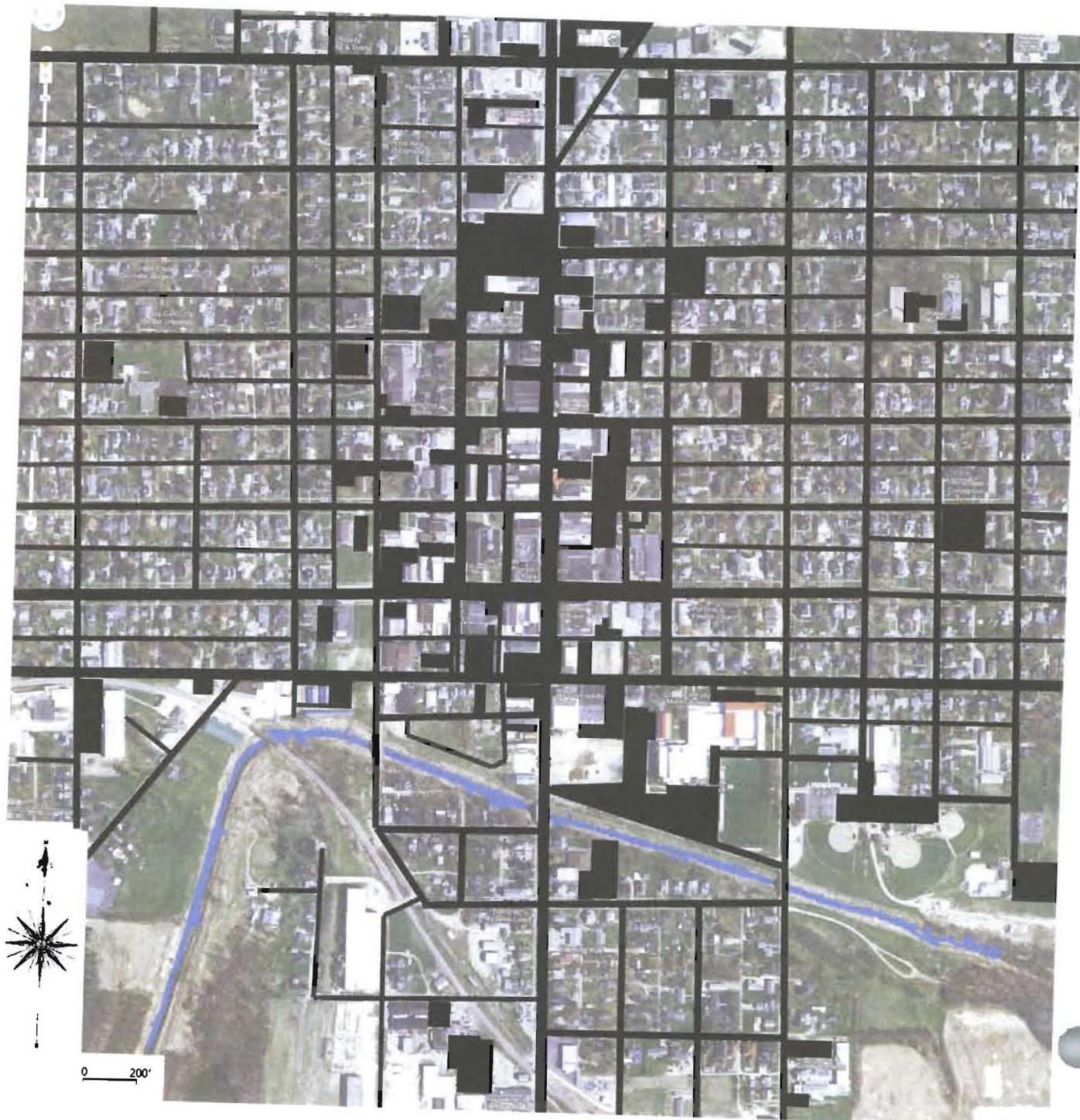
## Rail lines, old and new



The rail line that ran through Portland years ago left a vacant swath of land, much of which has been sold off. There is a section of land where the depot was located that has not been fully developed. This land provides a crucial connection in the proposed Portland Parks system.









# Pavement

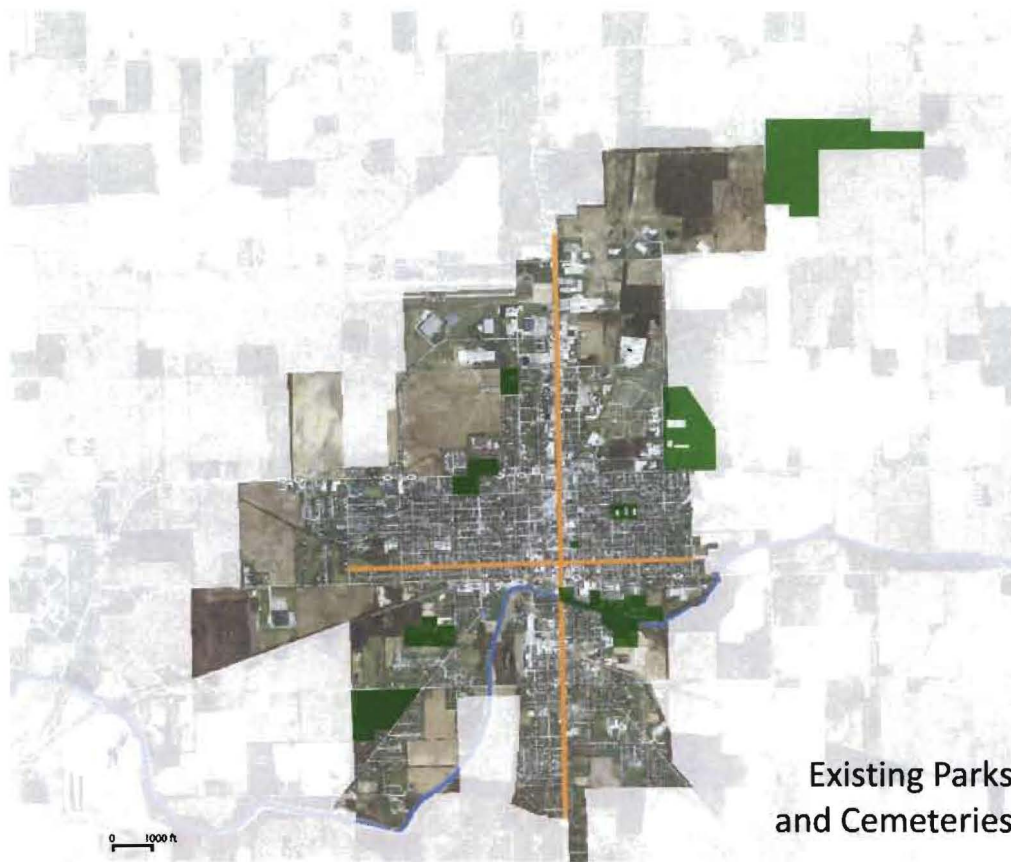
The pavement in downtown does not allow water to pass through it. This contributes to the amount of water that is treated in the sewage treatment plant and the amount of sewage that spills over into the Salamonie River when the treatment facility is over capacity.

The green overlay of the park spaces and

connecting threads shows how the parks, as a system, can contribute to solving the flooding problem. The green areas are places where water can run through rain catchment systems that slow and filter water before it gets to the river through the use of curb-cuts and urban rain gardens.

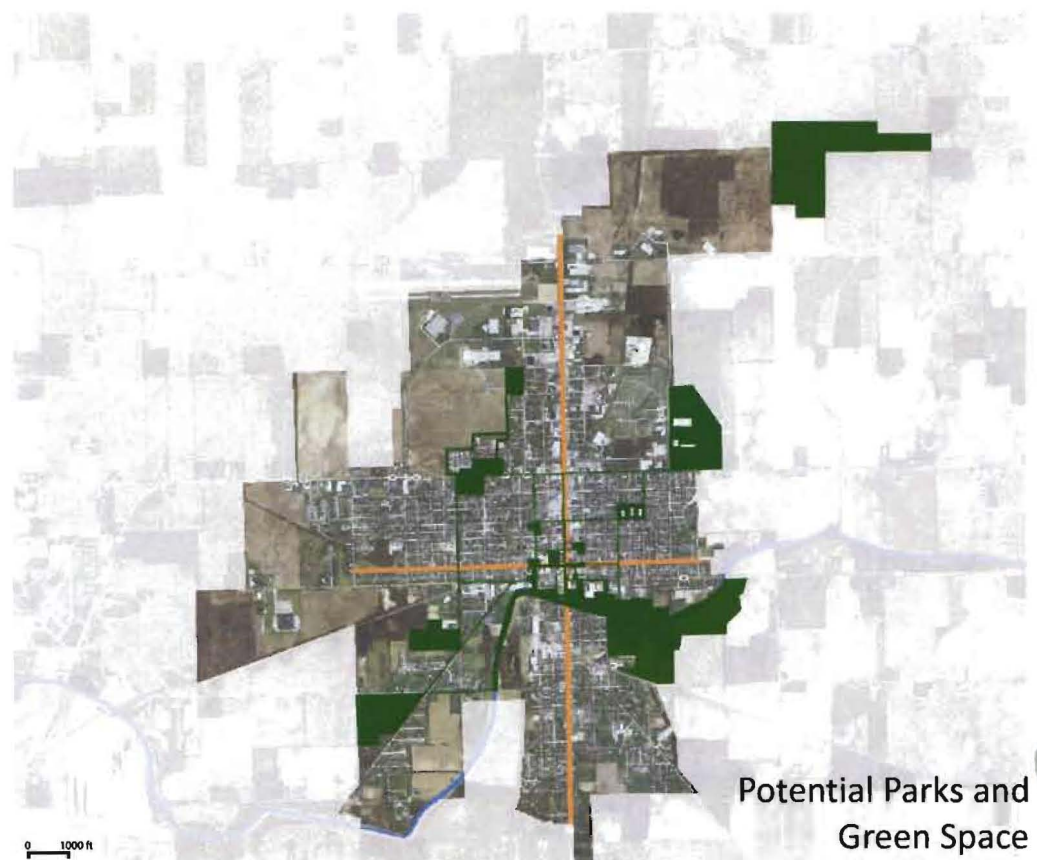






Existing Parks  
and Cemeteries

There are a lot open spaces in Portland with potential for park development. The current open spaces are islands around the community that are not connected. Creating a system of parks and open spaces would unify the town along with the recreation areas. A small town needs to be unified and acting as a unit to be a successful community because there is no room for division in that smaller environment.



Potential Parks and  
Green Space



# Proposed Green Infrastructure



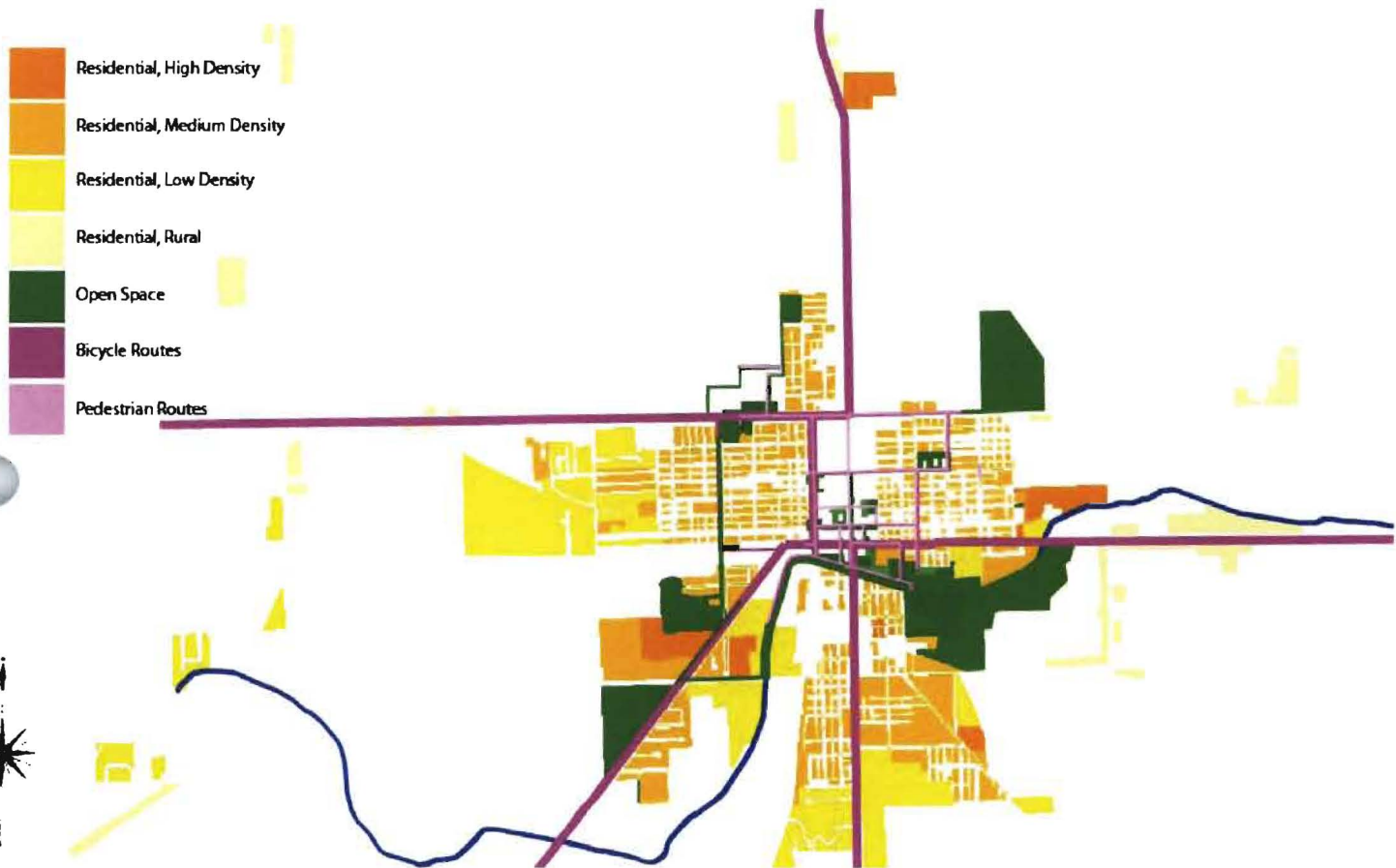




# Proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

Bicyclists could come from miles around into downtown Portland with an established bicycle system. Bicycle routes would also exist in and between residential neighborhoods. This larger

bicycle system would connect to the bicycle system downtown and the pedestrian system as well.



These wide range routes would be marked by "Share the Road" and "Bicycle Route" signs. Once in town the route would be marked with signs and

separate bike lanes on designated roads like Main and Ship Streets.



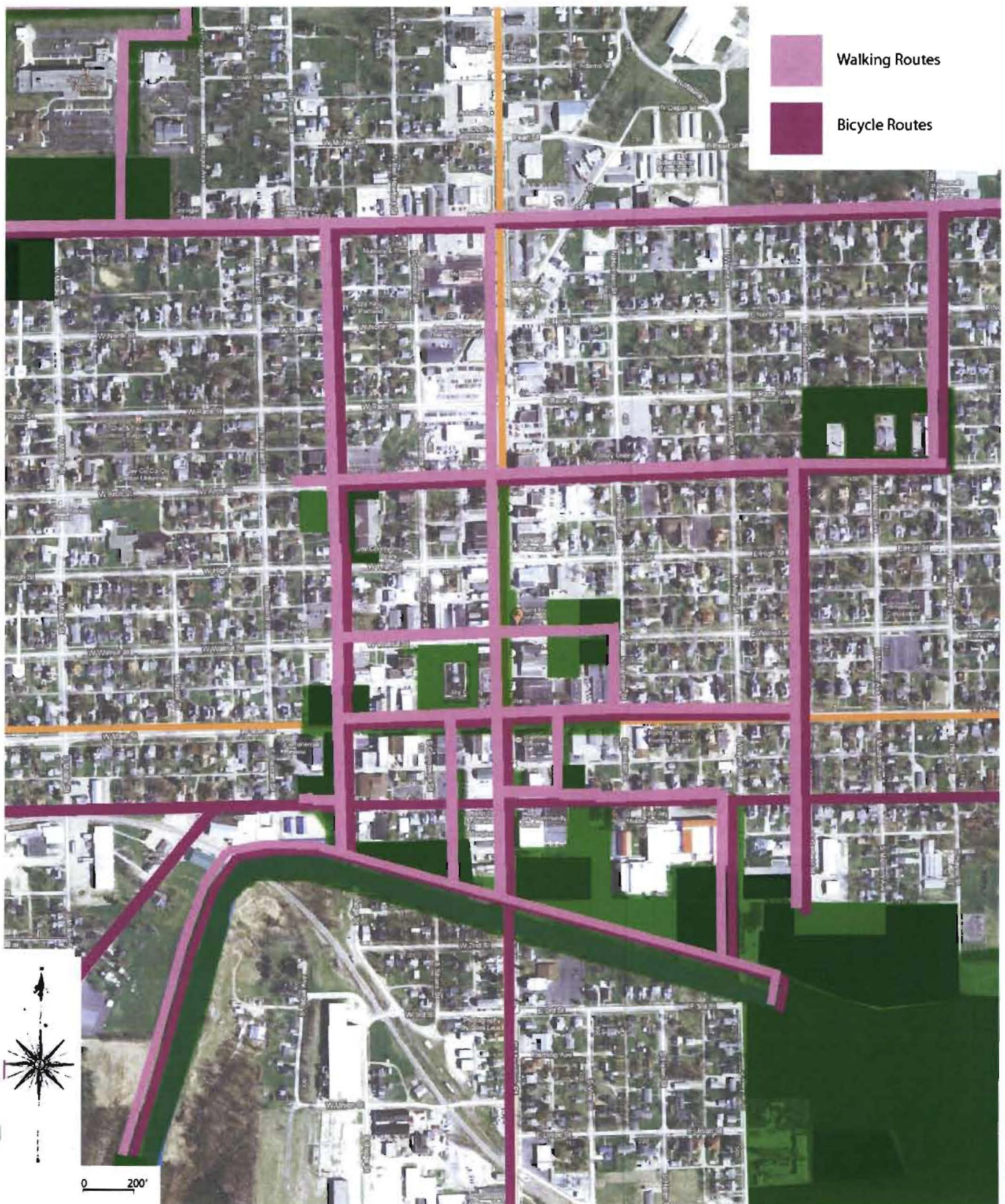
Bicycle hubs around town give bike-riders locations to get off their bicycles and park them. These locations are near potential retail and residential areas as well as existing offices and

parks. People can come from out of town or from different neighborhoods and feel comfortable securing their bike and walking around downtown.





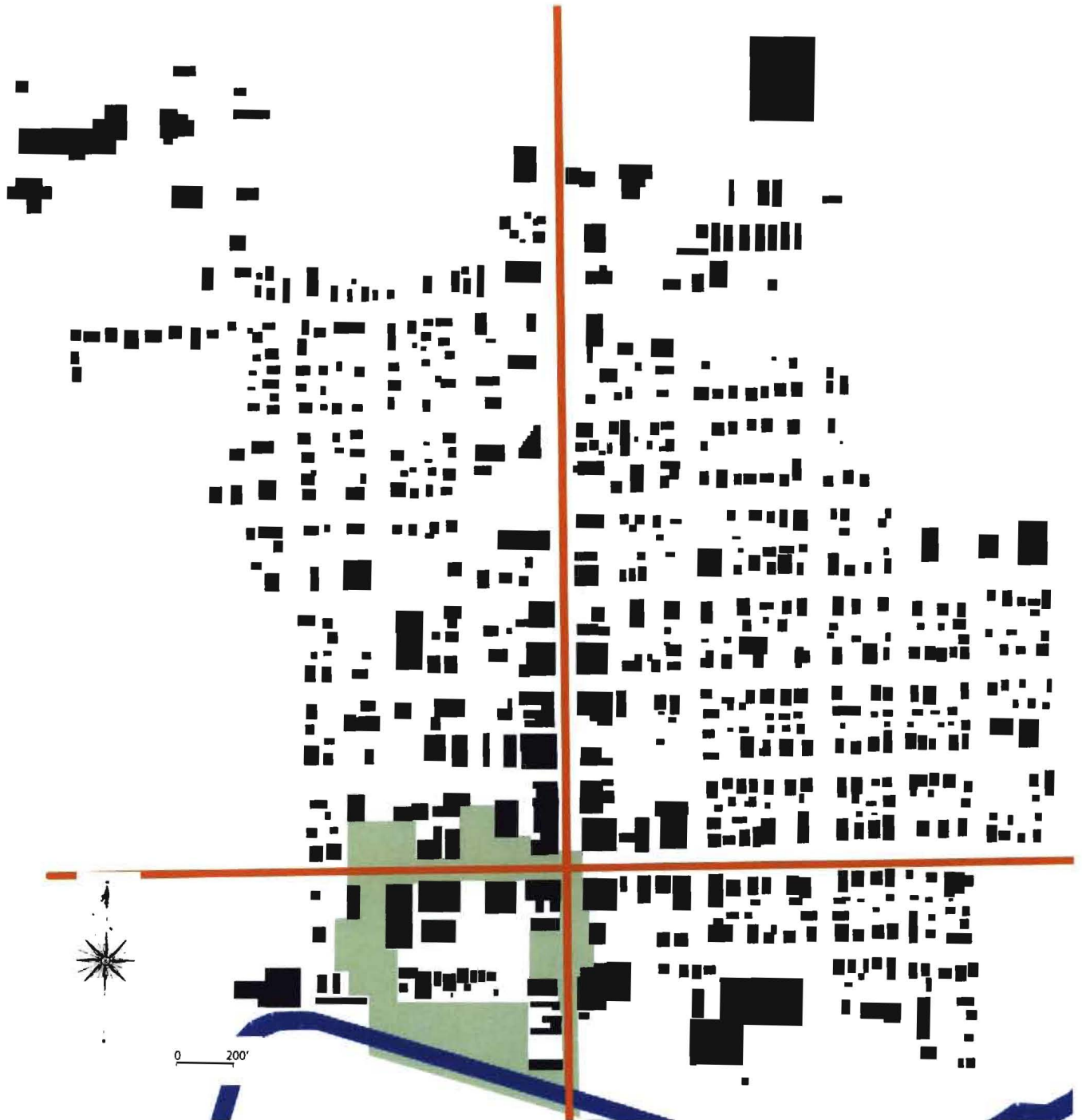
# Proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure





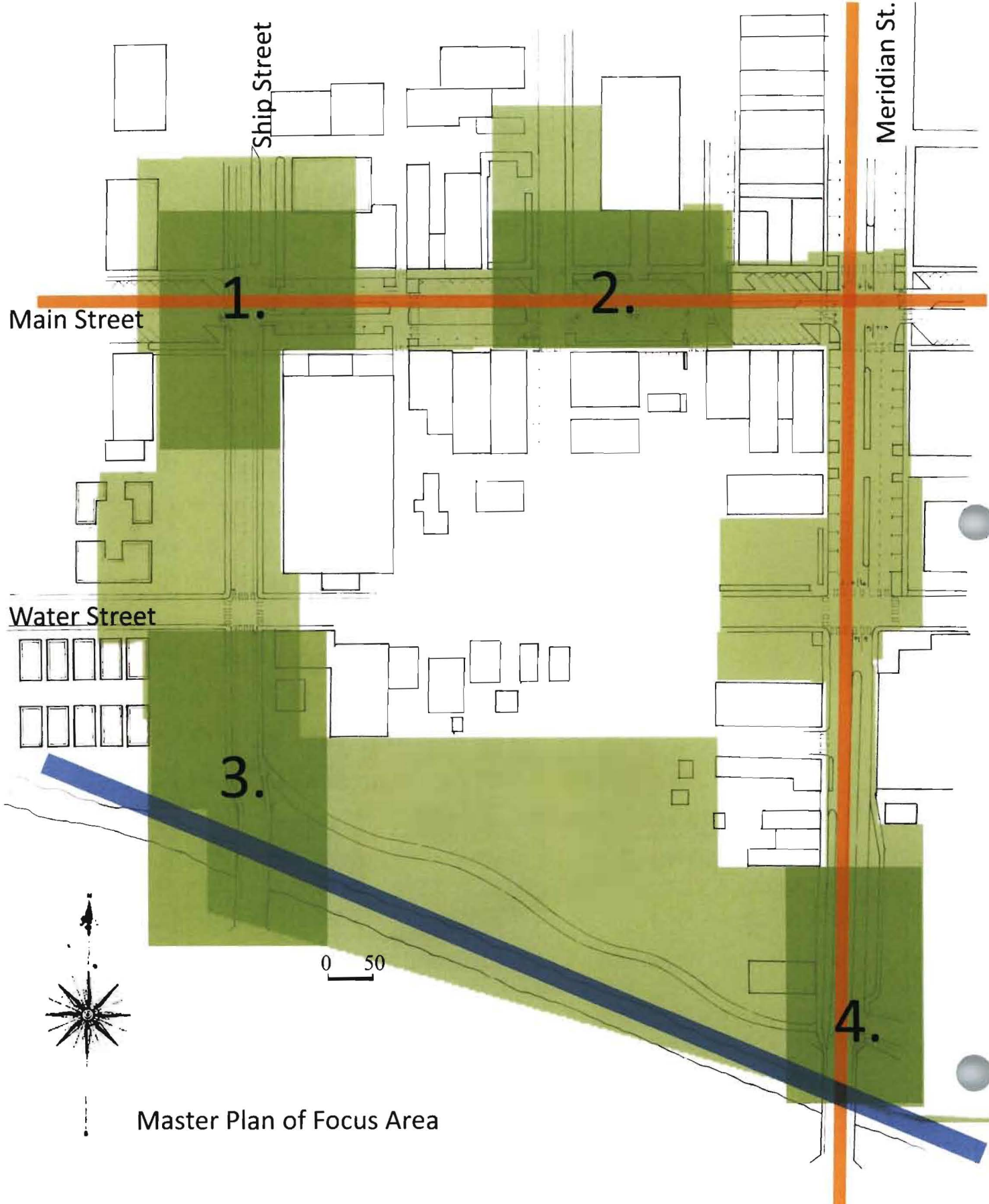


# Focus Area



After considering the park, bicycle and pedestrian systems , this green highlighted area addresses all three systems and provides a sampling of the possibilities for the entire

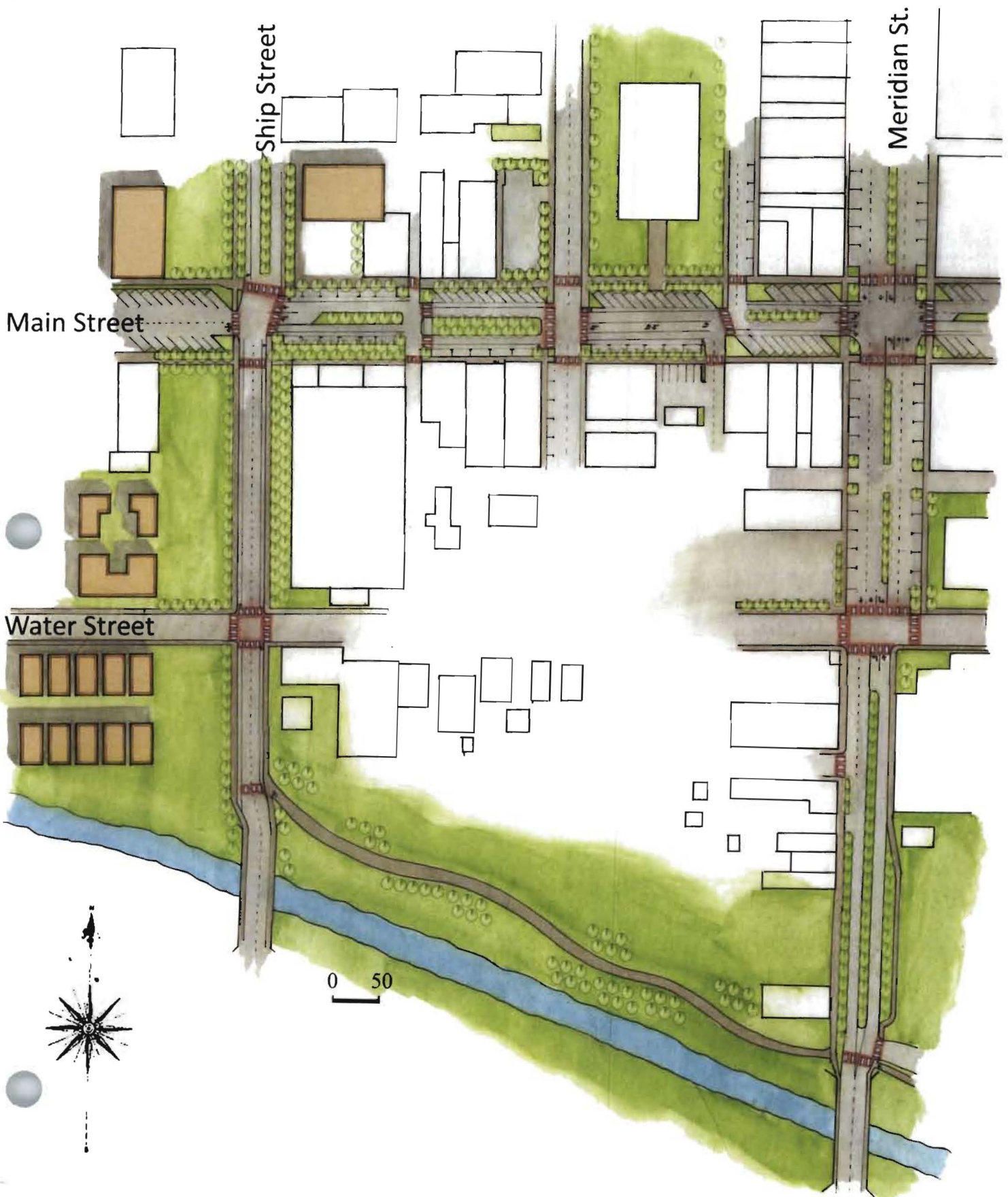
Portland downtown. The design shows how to address streets, pedestrian traffic, parking, parking lots, open space and stormwater run-off.



Master Plan of Focus Area

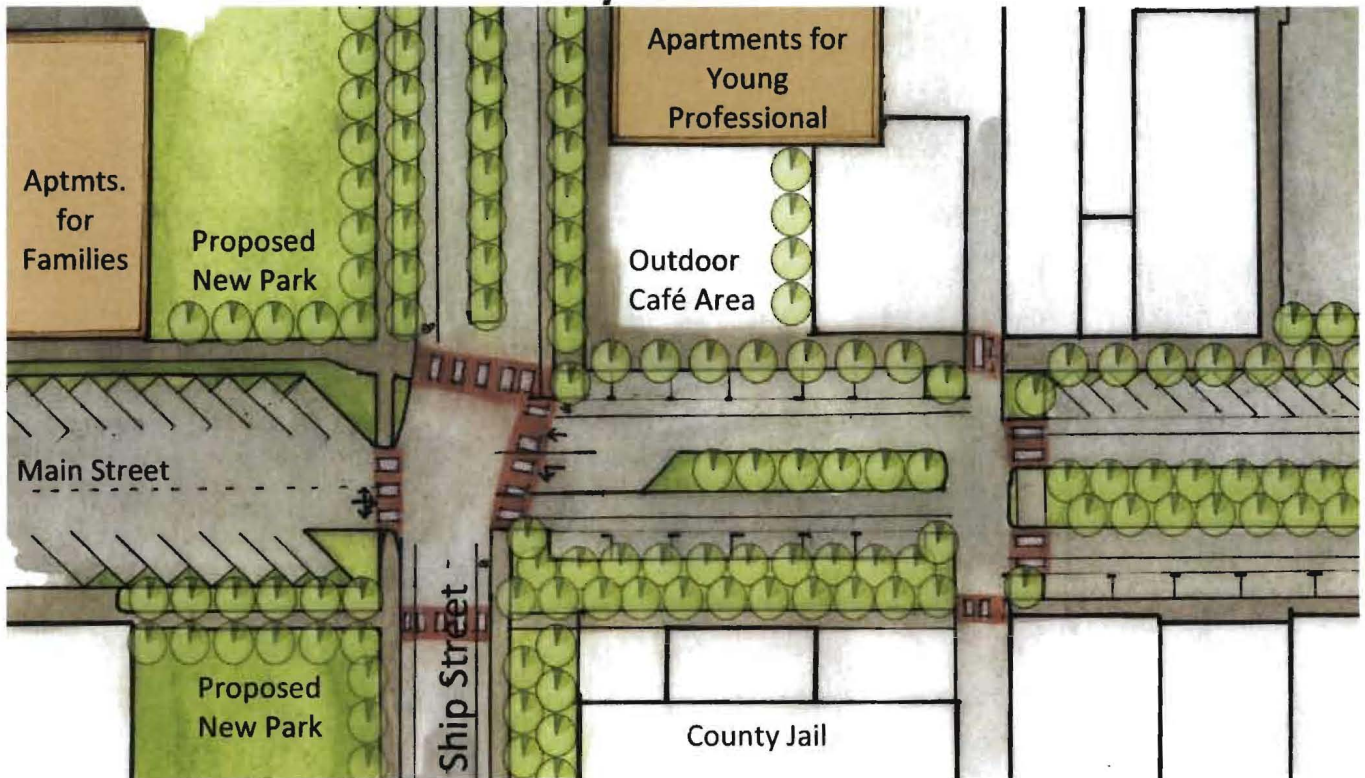


# Master Plan

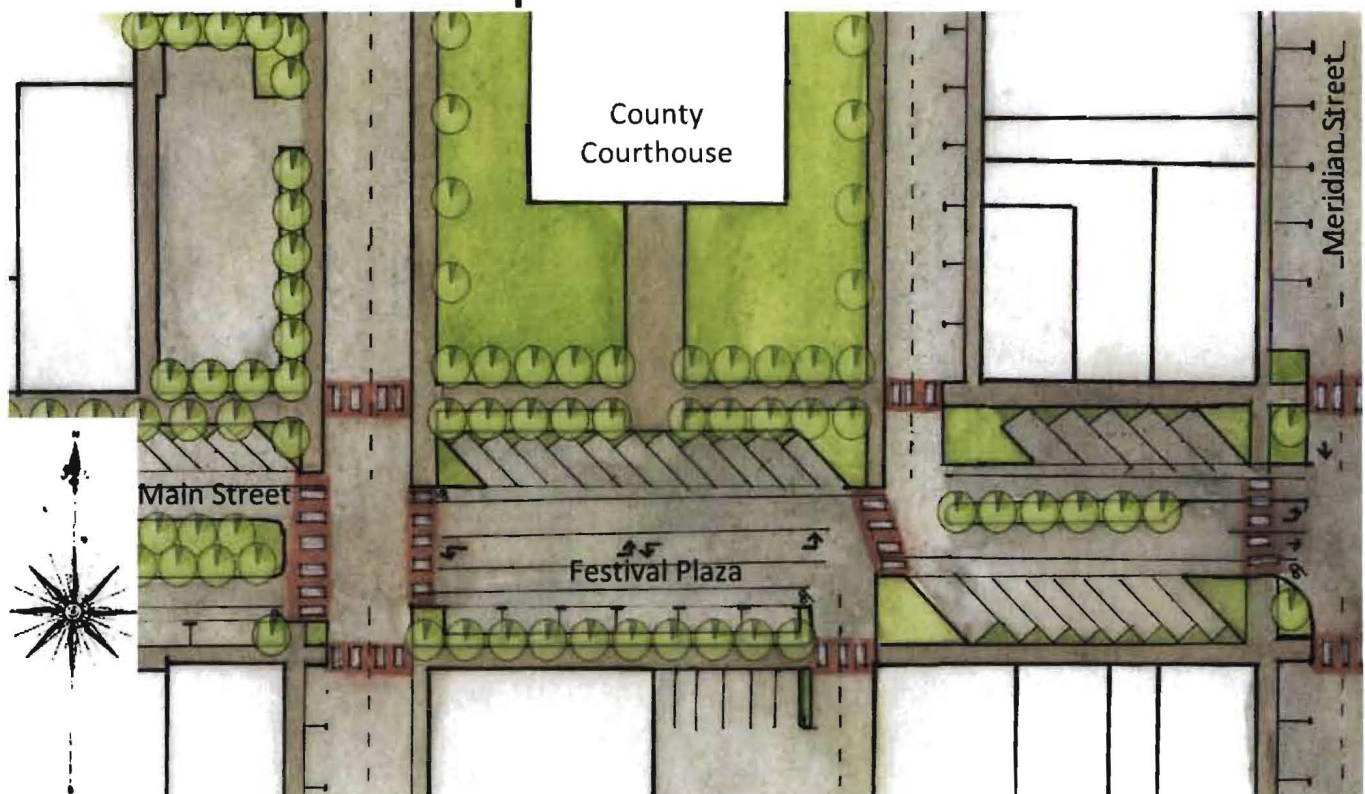




# 1. Residential Family Corner

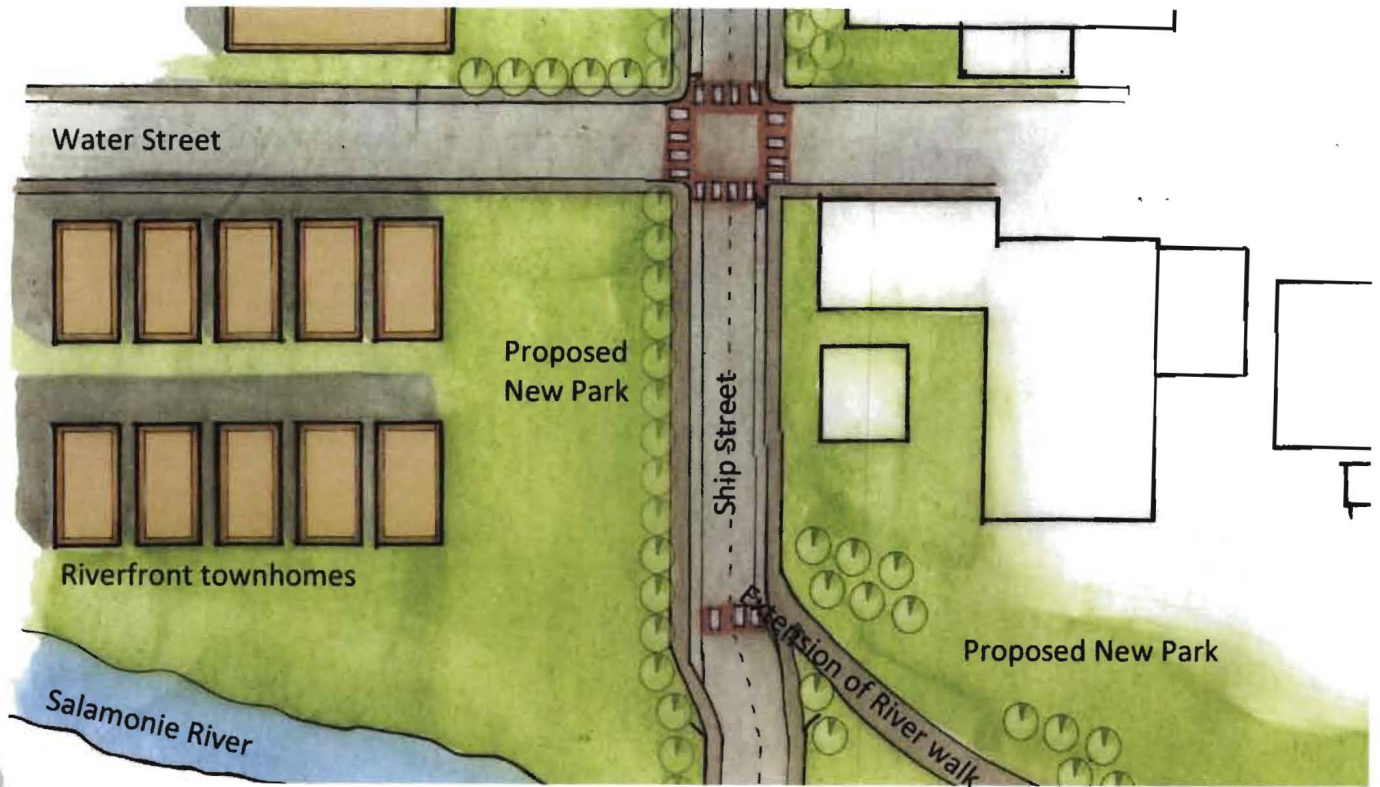


# 2. Courthouse Square

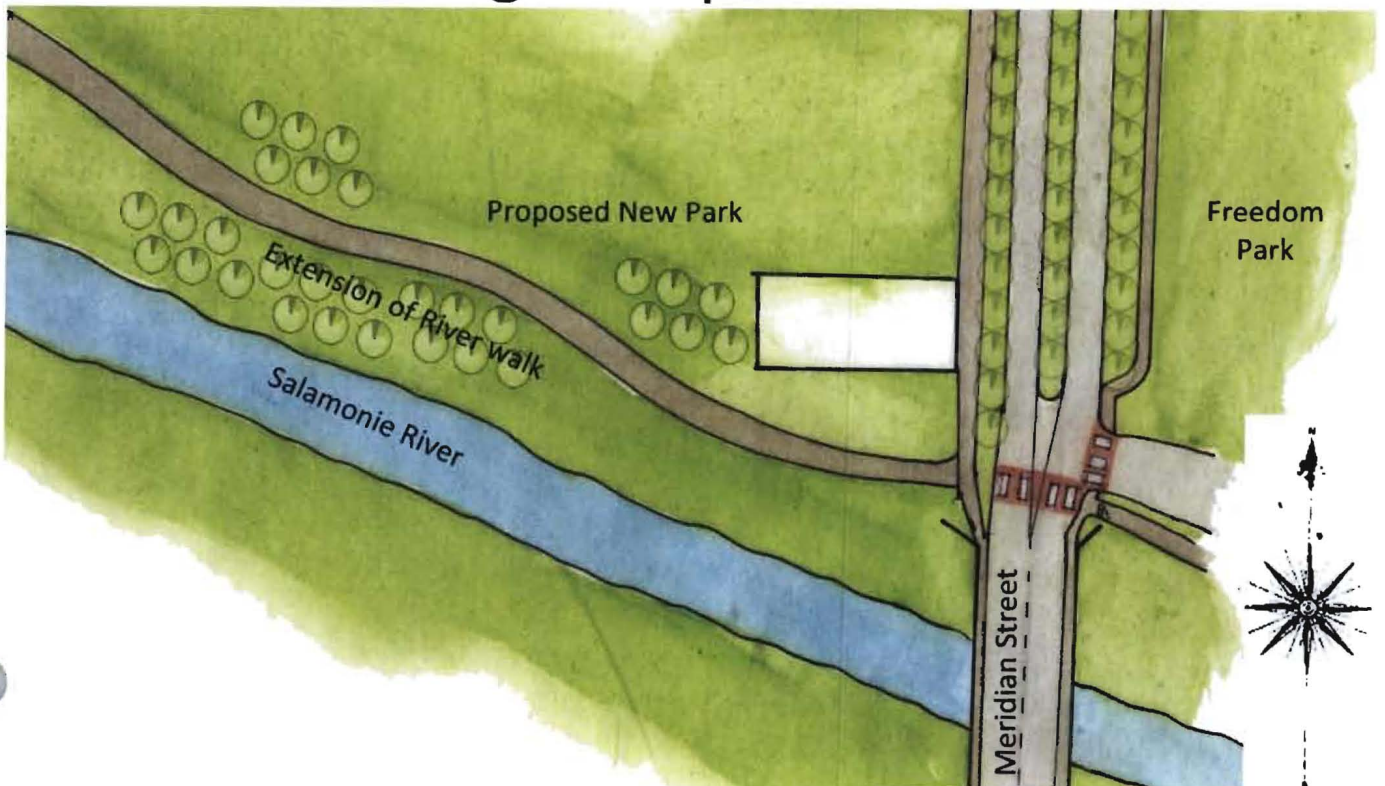




### 3. Connection to the River



### 4. A drive through the park





# Existing Conditions

## 1. Residential Family Corner—Ship and Main



Underutilized open space., blank walls, low residential density

## 2. Courthouse Square—Main and Commerce



Extra wide road, underutilized courthouse plaza

### 3. Connection to the River—Salamonie River and Ship



Photo by Becca James

Invasive species along river, straight river floods

### 4. A Drive through the Park—Meridian and Salamonie



New park and River Path east of Meridian Street, Open area to the west of Meridian, beautiful bridge



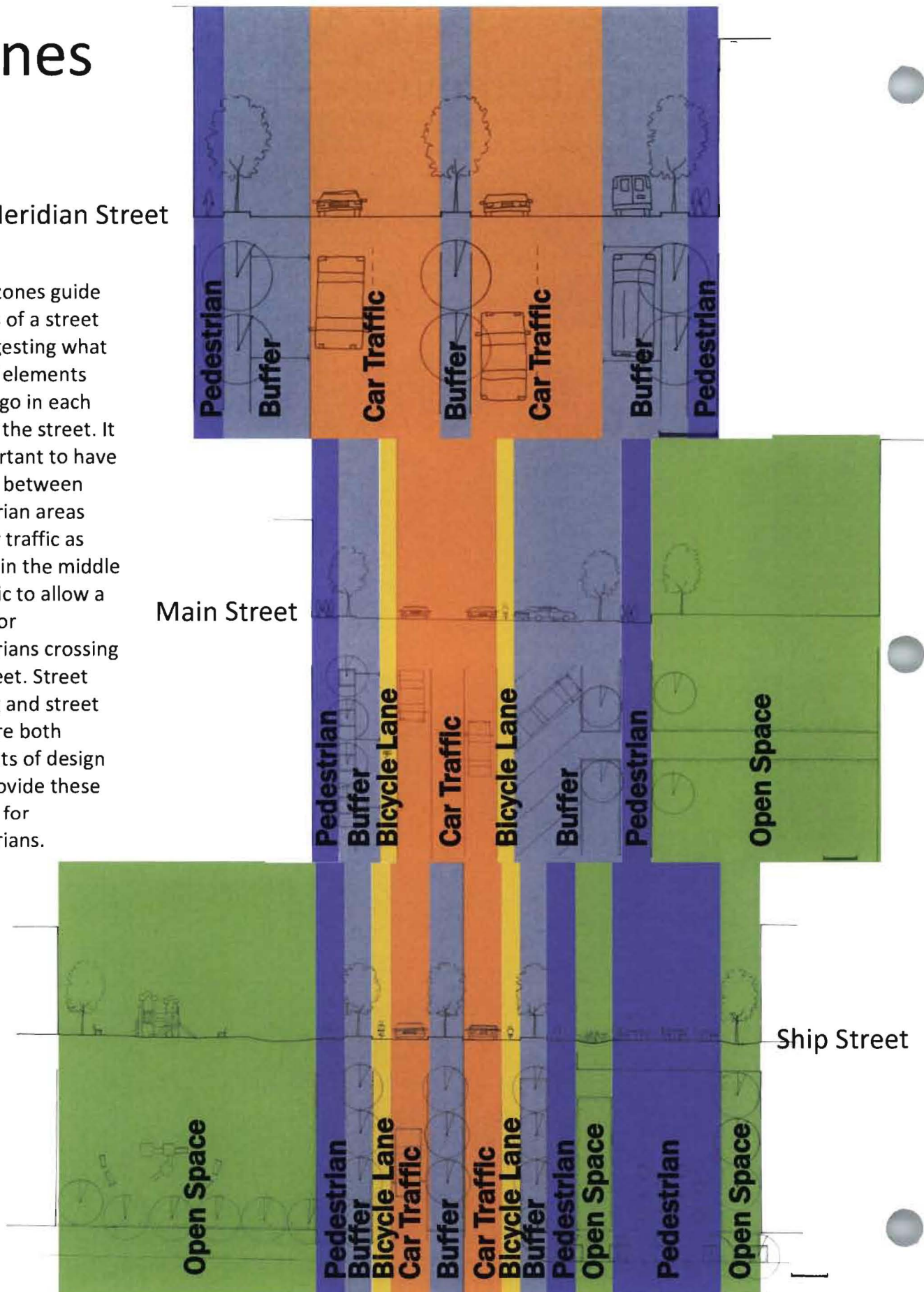
# Zones

## Meridian Street

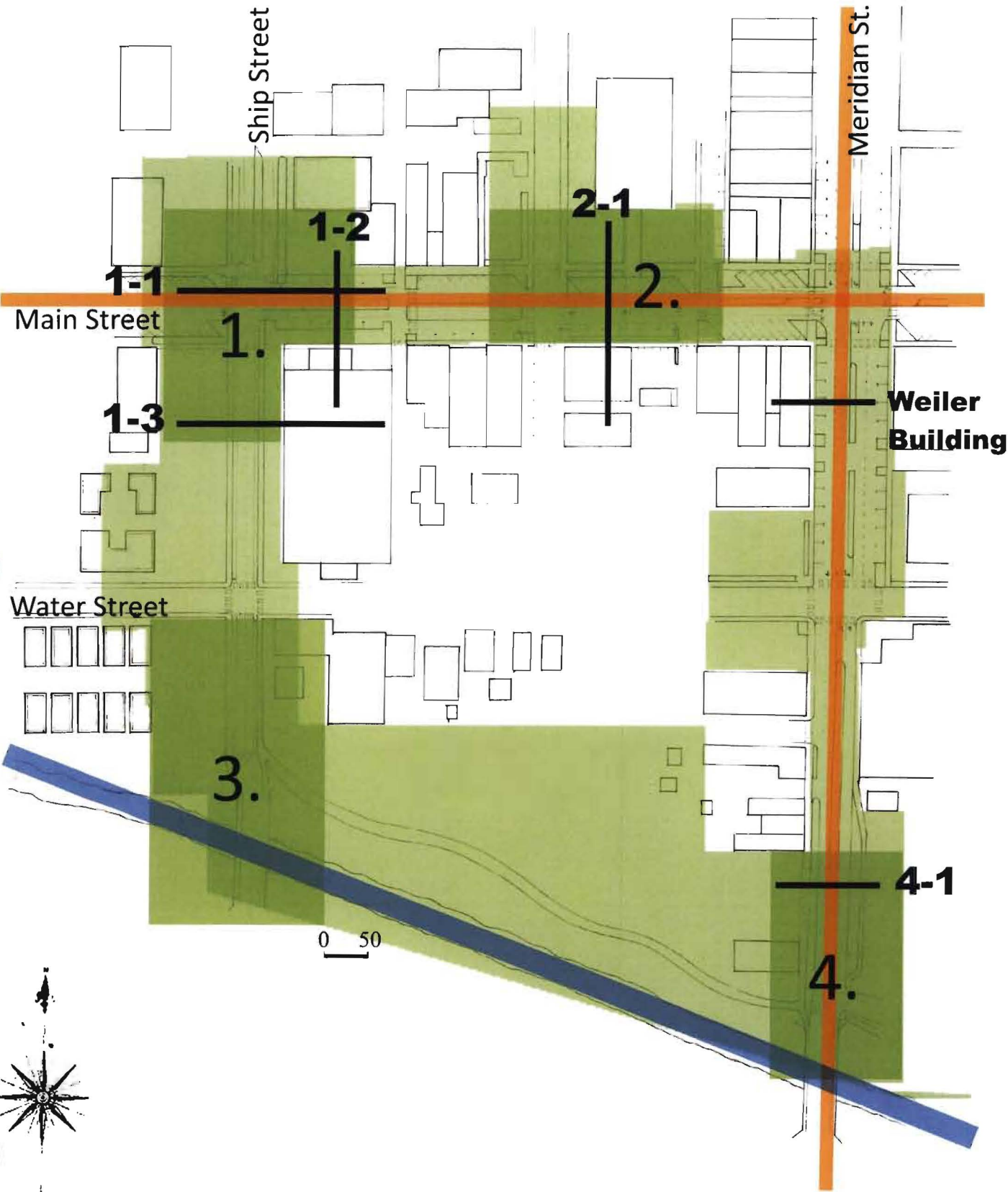
Street zones guide designs of a street by suggesting what type of elements should go in each area of the street. It is important to have buffers between pedestrian areas and car traffic as well as in the middle of traffic to allow a break for pedestrians crossing the street. Street parking and street trees are both elements of design that provide these buffers for pedestrians.

## Main Street

## Ship Street



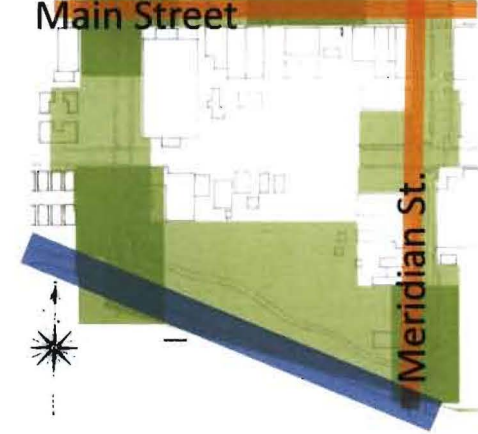
# Focus Area



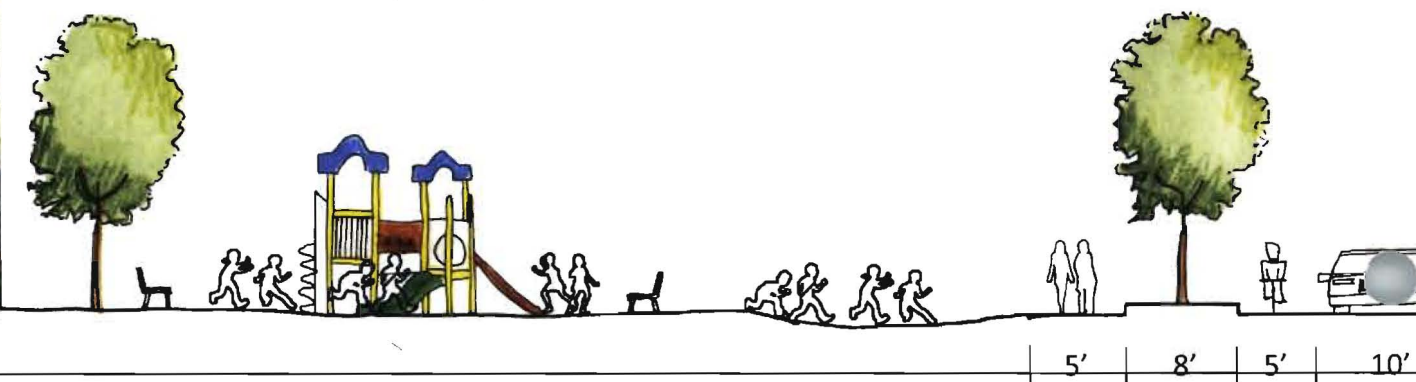


1-1

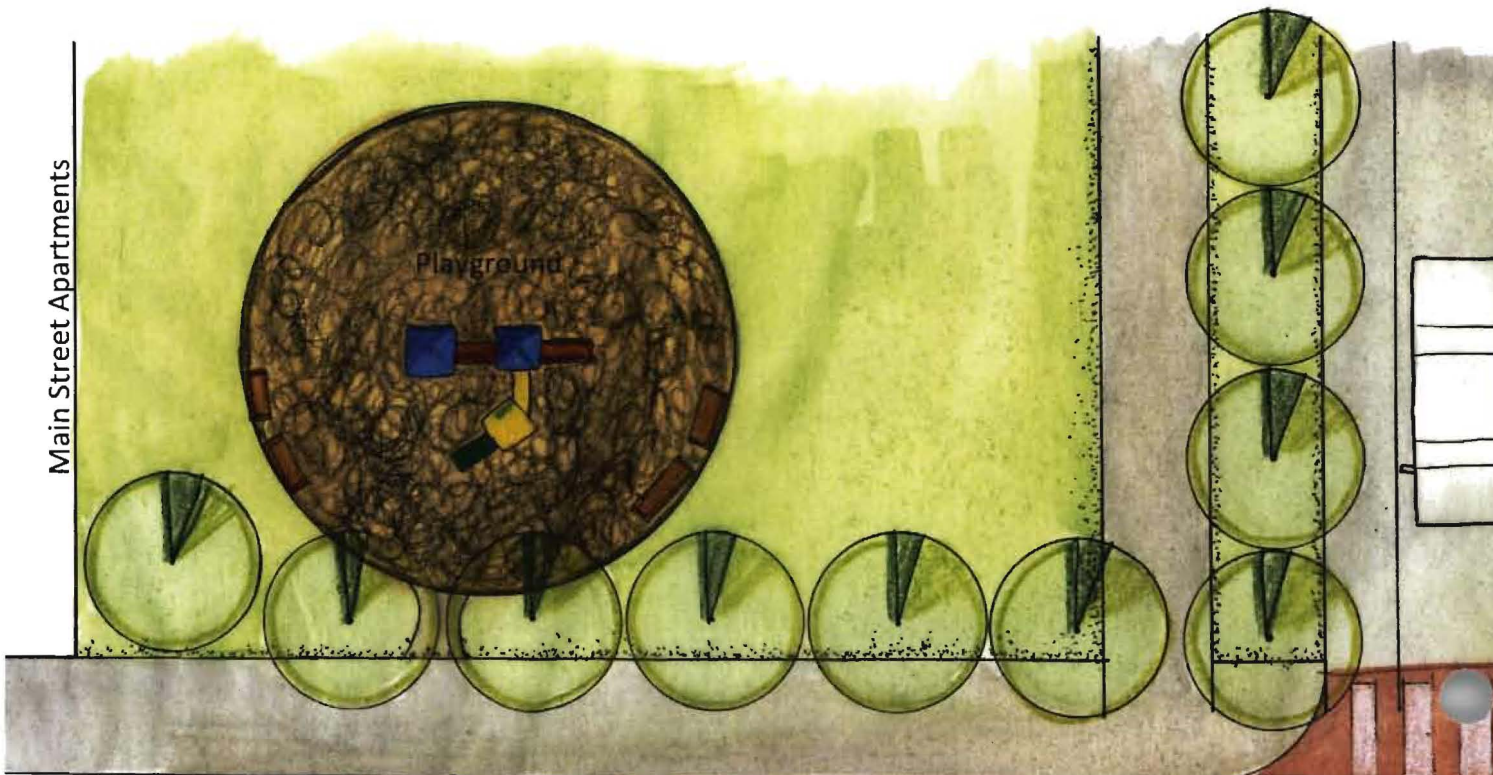
# Section 1-1 Playground Outdoor Café



Looking across Main Street from the jail to the former Tom and Rod's Restaurant, there is potential for an outdoor café and roof-top patio for a second-floor apartment. New apartments would provide a wall and create plaza space.



Main Street Apartments



Main Street



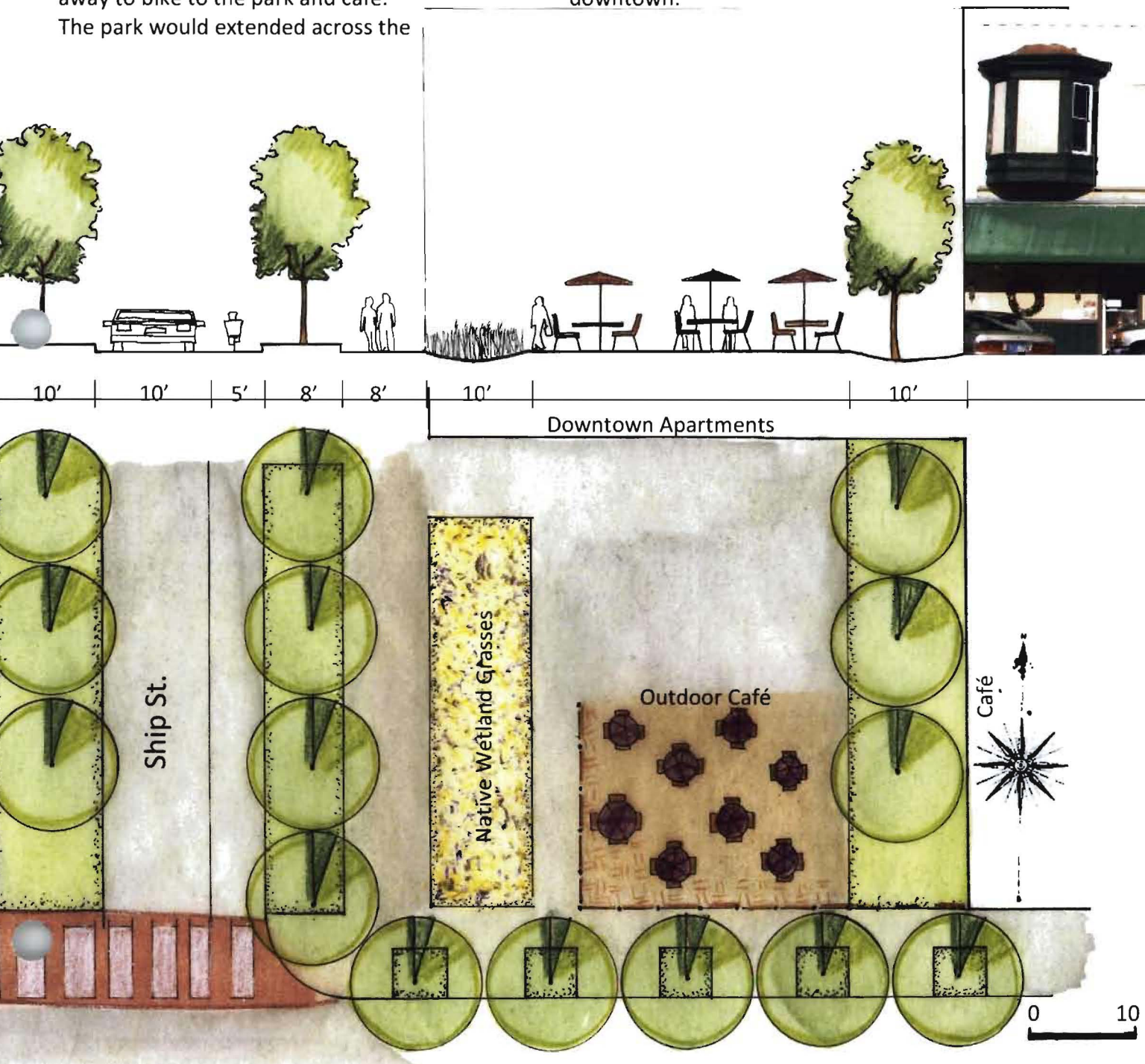
# Street Scapes

## 1. Residential Family Corner

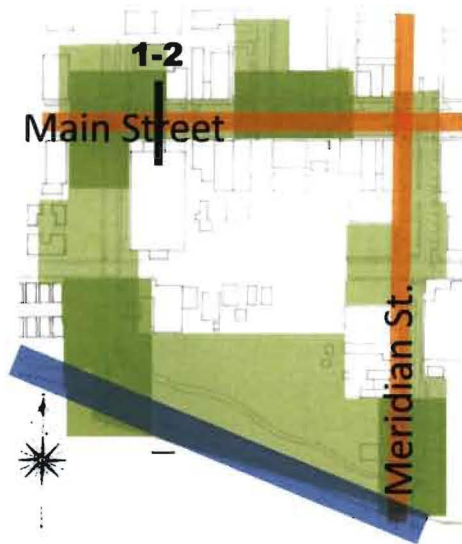
The family zone would cater to the families and young professionals in the new buildings that would border the site, as well as to those living in the neighborhood adjacent to the park area. Both Ship and Main Streets are streets where bike lanes would be marked, allowing people from farther away to bike to the park and café.

The park would extended across the

street with street trees that create separate spaces while bringing the entire site together in a park-like atmosphere. Second story apartments above the café and other businesses on Main Street and Meridian would be a great opportunity to use existing buildings to bring more residences into downtown.



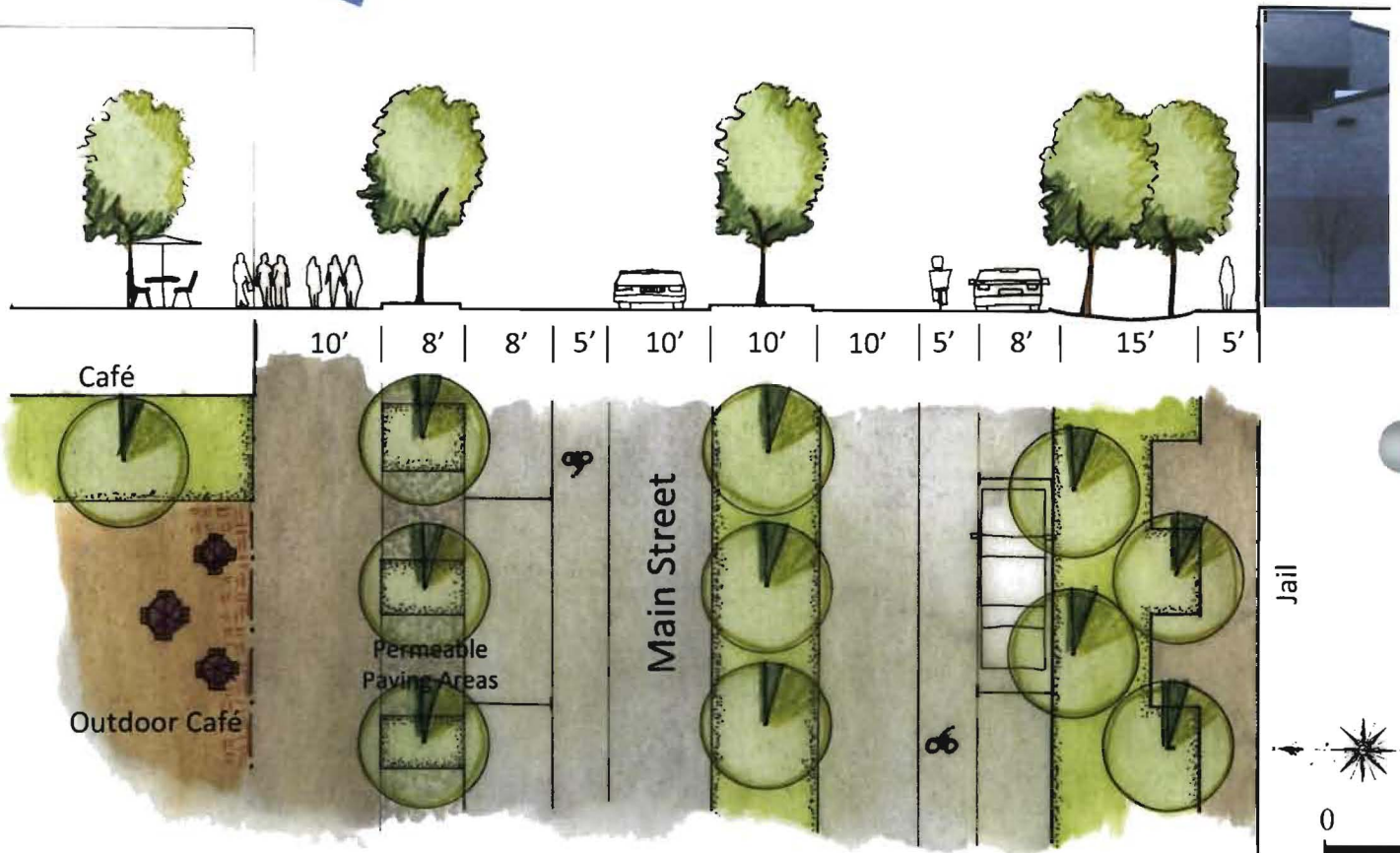




## Section 1-2 Jail to Café



Double line of trees in Portland, OR.



The double line of trees on the north side of the jail could provide a buffer for the café patrons from the concrete wall of the jail. This would soften the area and make it more comfortable for pedestrians (example: photo at top right of page).

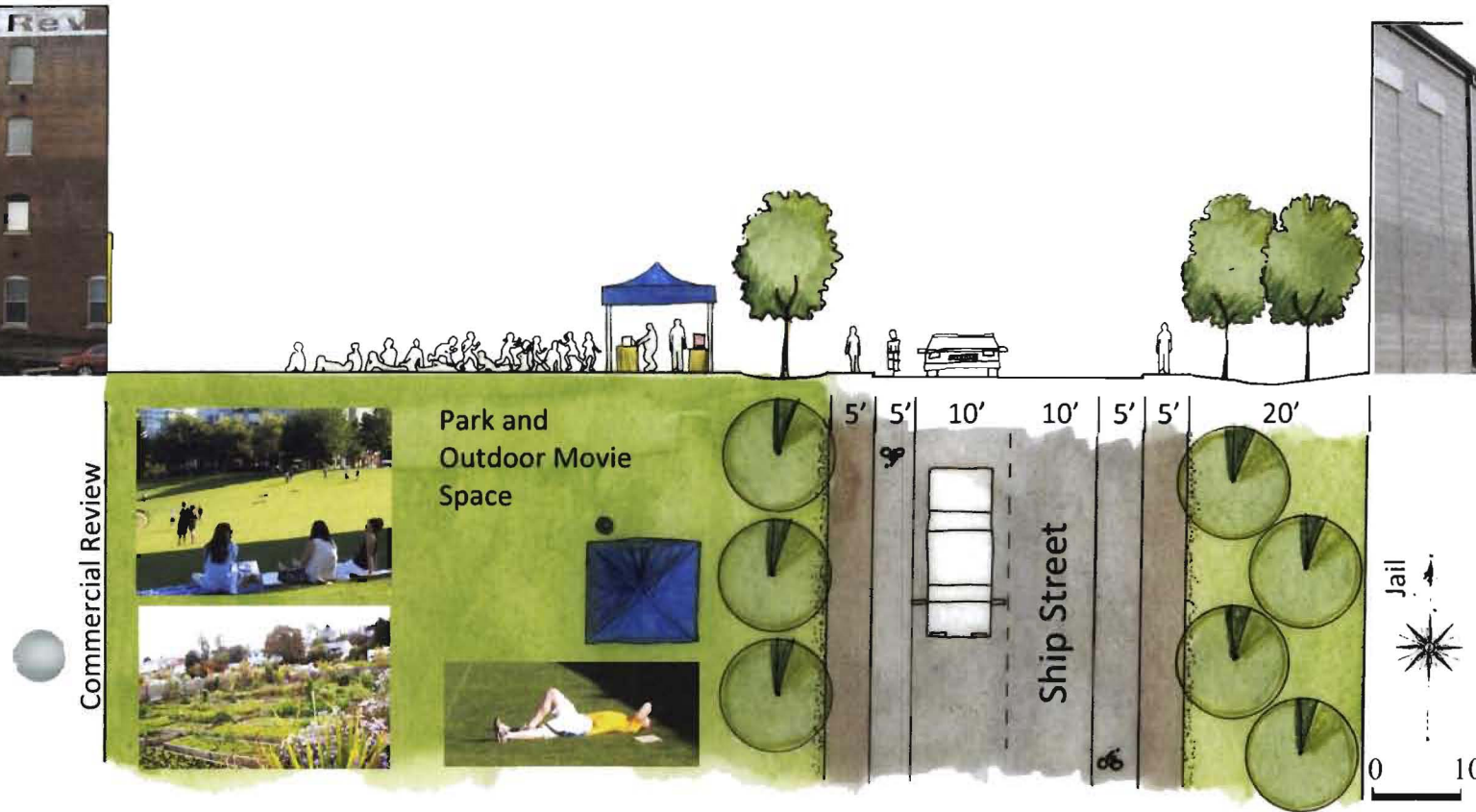
Permeable paving between the street trees in the sidewalk would allow water to pass between the bricks to reach the roots of the trees. This would decrease the amount of stormwater run-off from the sidewalks.

Permeable paving can be beautiful and would go with the character of the space. Photo From: [www.genestarchitecture.com/\\_catalog\\_61539/Stormwater\\_Management\\_Products](http://www.genestarchitecture.com/_catalog_61539/Stormwater_Management_Products)



# Street Scapes

## 1. Residential Family Corner



The park next to The Commercial Review Building would be a great place for outdoor movies on the large brick wall. The open area would connect the playground park, north of Main Street, to the Salamonie River with continuous lines of trees. The contrast of tree line to open space would emphasize the sense of space.

This park would also be a location where community gardens could be added. This would bring gardens to the people making for easy access for residents downtown.

The residential additions to the block would supply park-users. These people would also be able to keep an eye on the space as they live adjacent to it. This would maintain security.

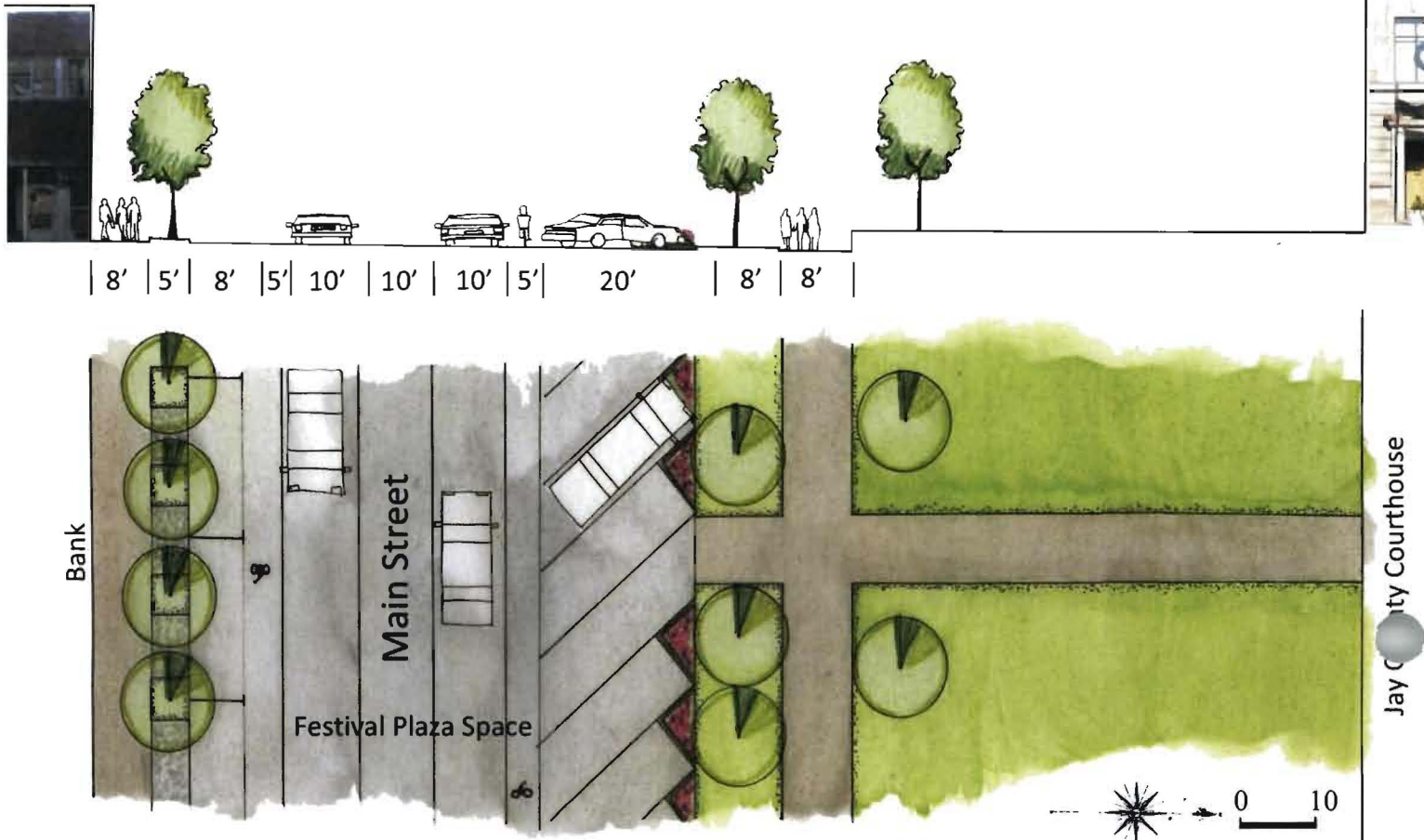


### Section 1-3 Park for Families



# Street Scapes

## 2. Courthouse Plaza



### Section 2-1 Courthouse Plaza



The courthouse plaza is an ideal location for Farmers' Markets and festivals. With an open street layout, there would be plenty of space for multiple rows of vendors to set up on Main Street. The County Courthouse is central in downtown, and is in a great location for people to walk or ride bikes to events held there.

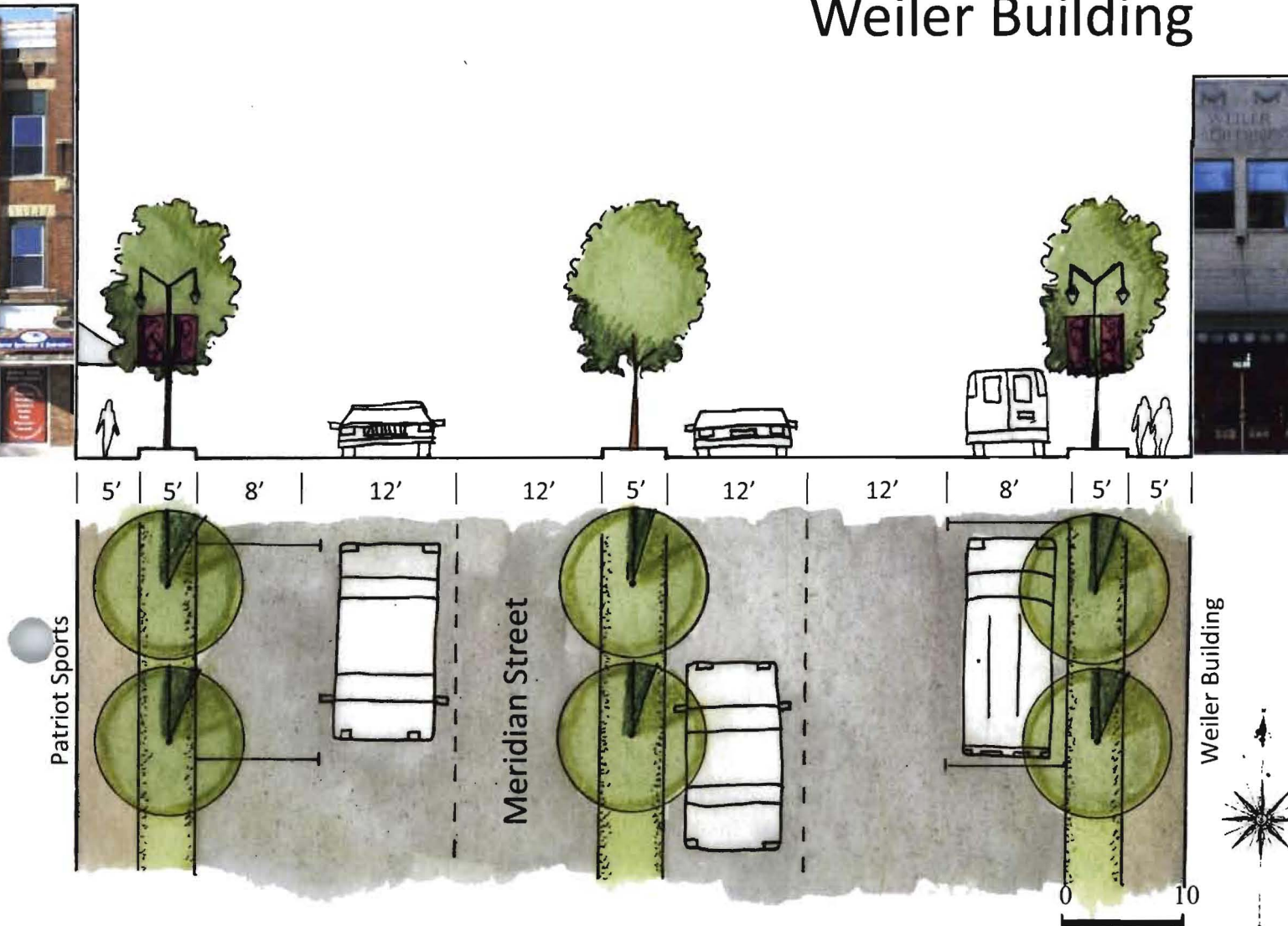
The addition of planters at the end of the angled parking spaces would bring color and vibrancy to the plaza.



Well maintained seating areas around the County Courthouse invite people to rest in its shadow.

# Street Scapes

## Weiler Building



Meridian Street at the intersection of Main Street is a wide expanse for a pedestrian to cross. The median in the middle of the road would make the four lanes seem less daunting. When car lanes are more enclosed traffic slows down a bit, making it safer for the pedestrian. Meridian Street is a state highway so any improvements would have to be approved by INDOT. The existing street lights (at left) are great assets to Meridian Street and should be continued on Main Street and other downtown streets. Banners along the sides of these light poles could provide community information to citizens and would add color to the street scape.

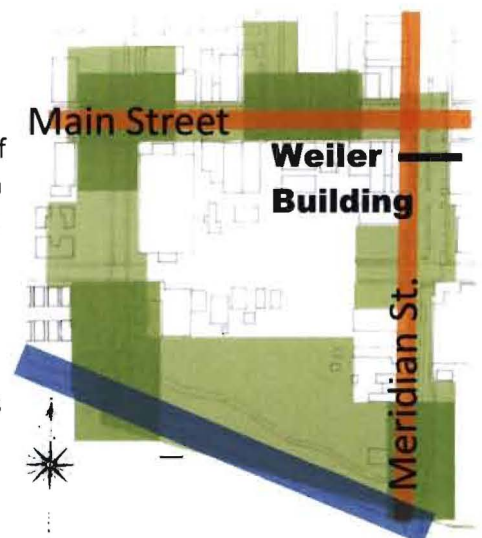






Photo by Becca James

Above: The view of downtown from the Arch Bridge is beautiful at dawn. The addition of a median and street trees would give a greater affect.

Above: Curb-cuts along the median and the street plantings on the sides would allow stormwater to run into the bed areas, infiltrating the water into the earth before it is spilled over into the Salamonie River. The photo above shows an example of a curb-cut

in a residential neighborhood in Portland, OR.

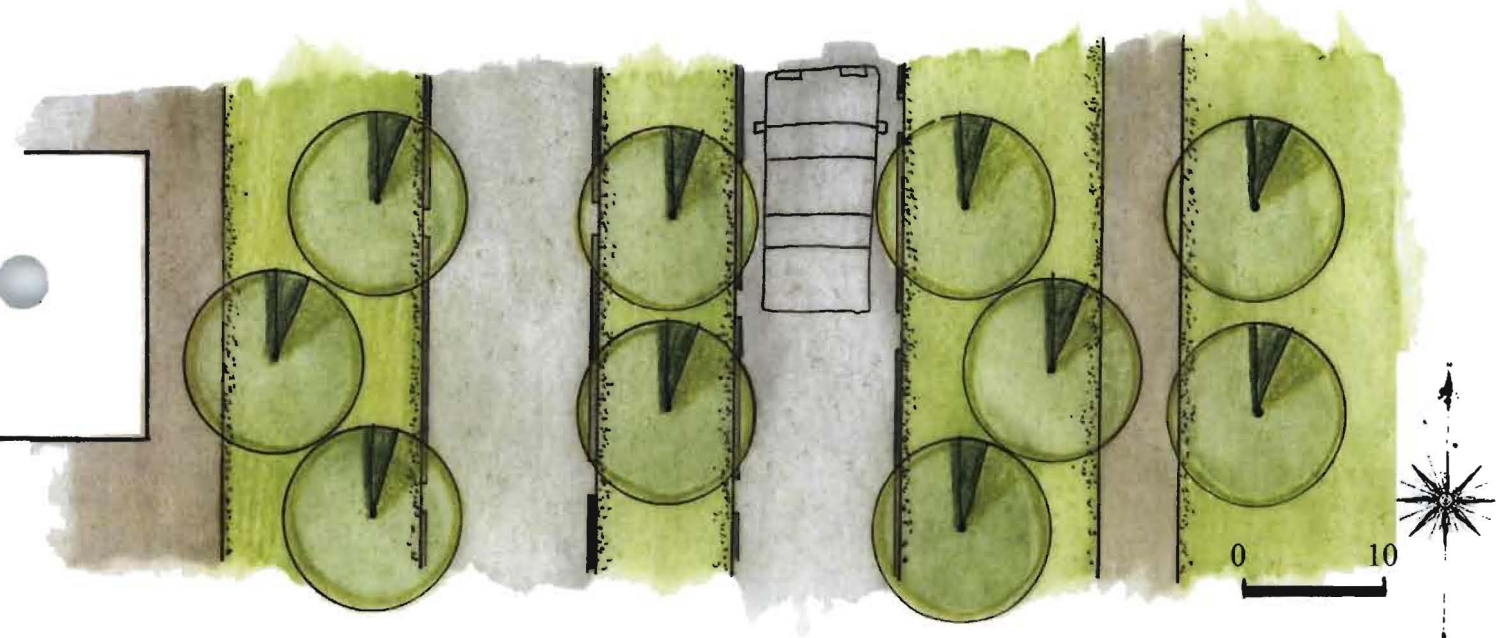
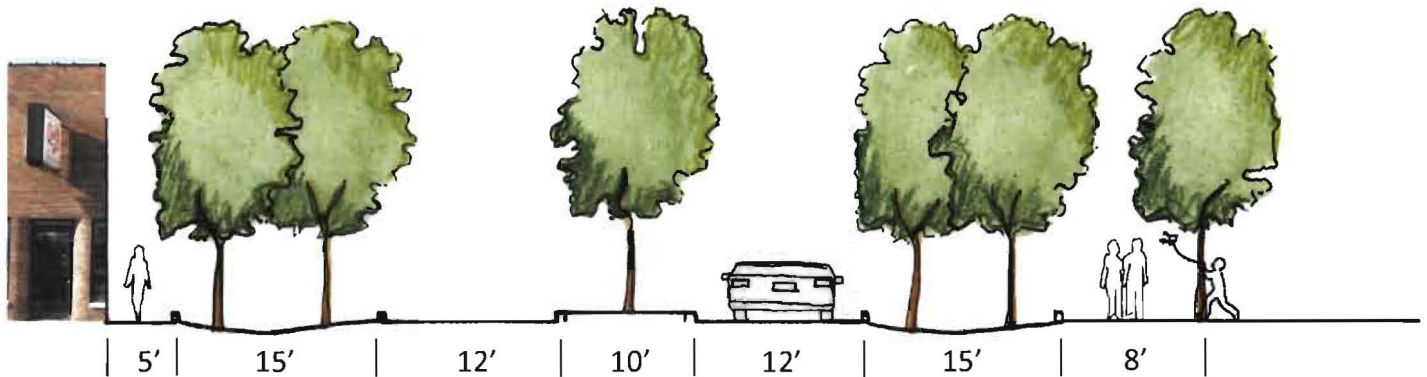
Below: Freedom Park, the east side of the proposed park crossing would be a great start to connecting a park system throughout downtown Portland.



## Section 4-1 Park to Park

# Street Scapes

## 4. A drive through the park

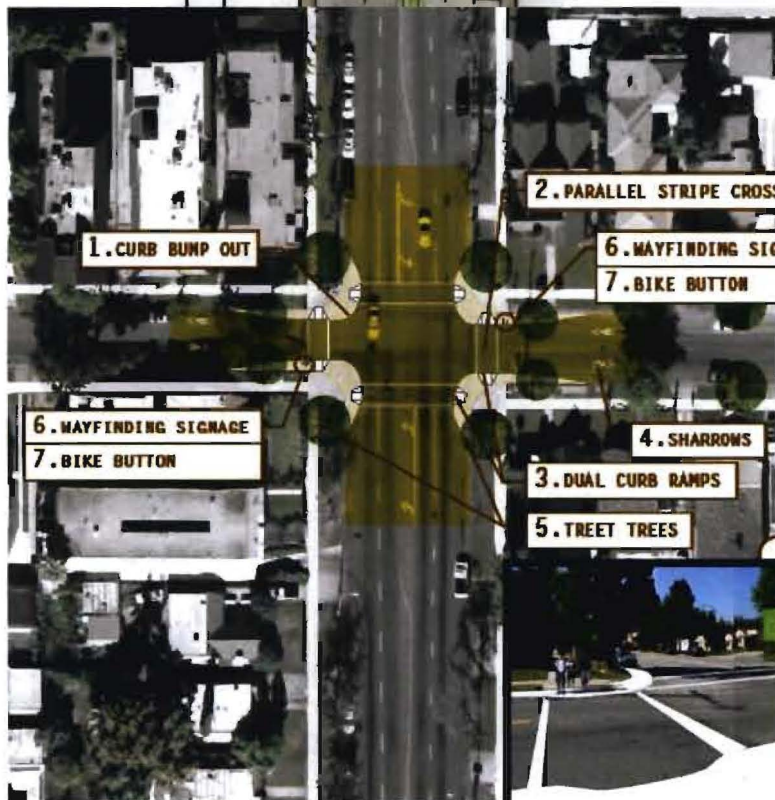
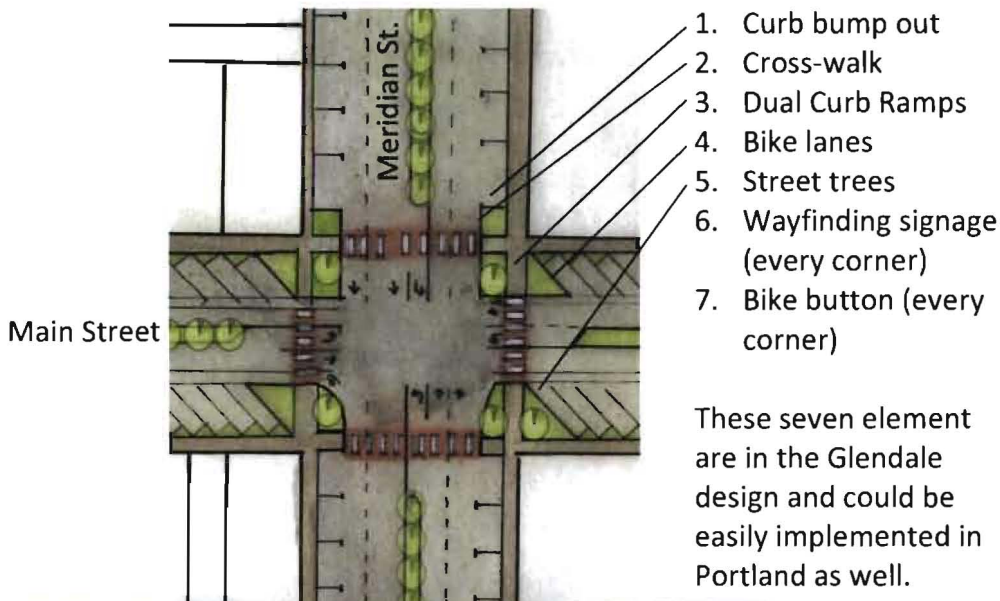


The gateway into downtown Portland from the south is across the Arch Bridge. But once a traveler crosses the bridge they are greeted with a park, an empty building, and a vacant lot. This space has great potential for a park gateway into downtown. By adding a median and creating side plantings along the street, Freedom Park, to the east, could be connected to a new riverfront park to the west.

The River Walk could be continued across Meridian to the west and bring with it a park. Continuing the park across the street would require acquiring the property that is currently a plant shop and possibly demolishing the building. This park would notify visitors of the great park presence in Portland and it would connect the park system with under-utilized land.



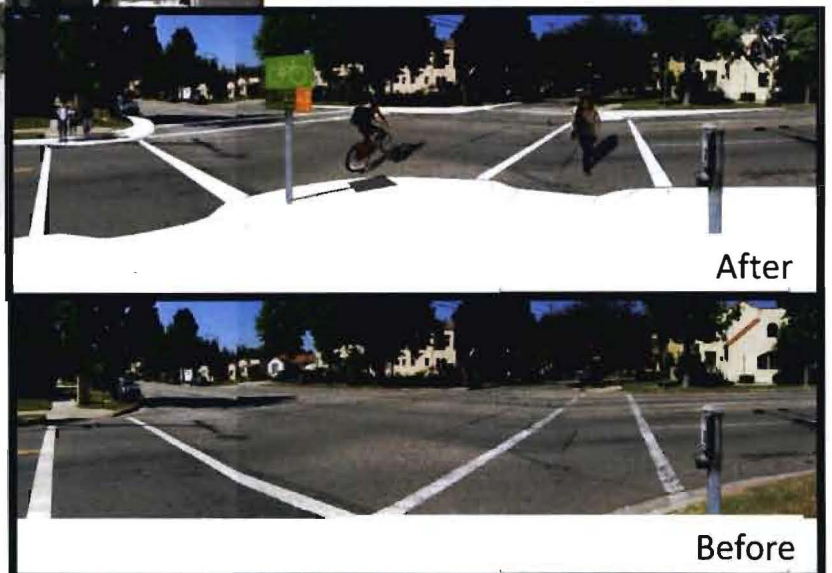
# Glendale, CA and Portland, IN



Bump-outs bring the pedestrian out farther on a sidewalk so there is less distance to travel to cross a wide multi-lane road. This precedent study in Glendale, Californian has similar sized streets to Portland's streets (four lane north/south, and two lane east/west).



These bump-outs make it safer for pedestrians to cross the street because they can see around parked cars better and will have a shorter crossing distance.



# Bump-outs Intersections



Main and Meridian  
facing west



Way Before

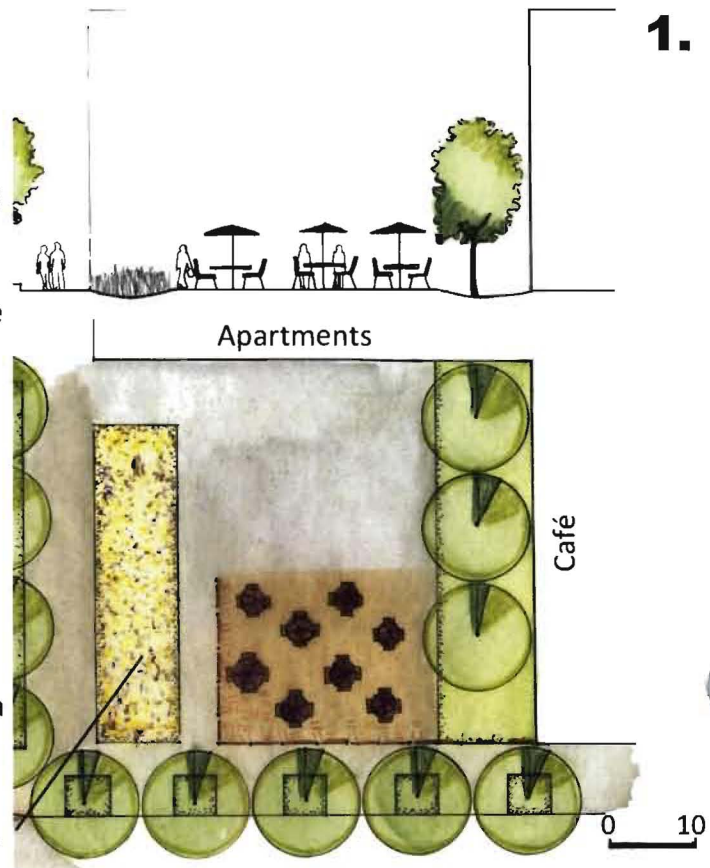


# Rain Water Infiltration

## 1. Residential Family Corner

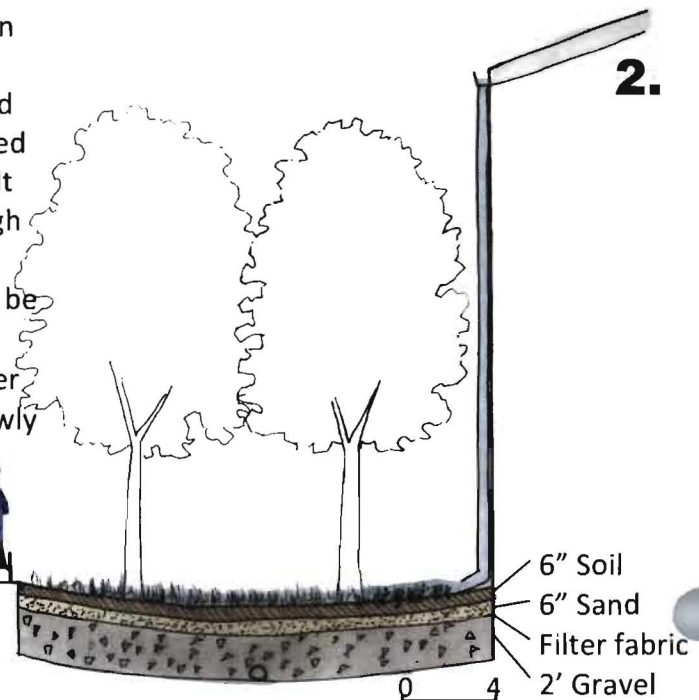
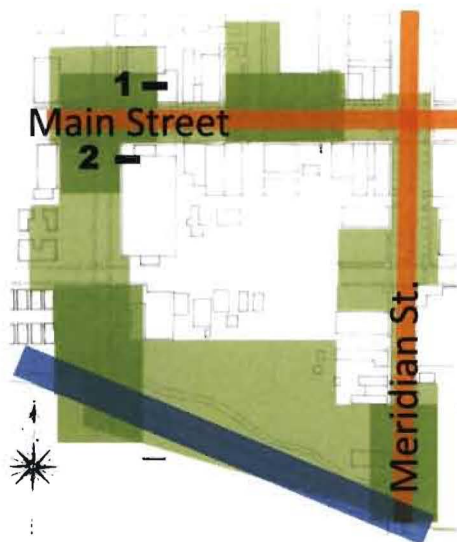
The water from the new apartments and from the café could be collected and retained in the planting areas near the buildings. The depressions of native grasses and trees would allow water to slowly infiltrate into the soil as opposed to running off into the sewer system. Native grasses as opposed to turf grass have deeper roots which would make the soil hold more water and infiltrate water better.

The plants on the adjacent page are included in the *Midwestern Short Stature Wetland Basin Seed Mix*, from Earth Source Inc. in Ft. Wayne. These plants are appropriate for urban wetland situations and in places where the water level is irregular and will drop frequently. There are many salt-tolerant plants that adapt to this irregular water supply. These plants are also chosen for high aesthetic appeal.



Water Infiltration Zone

Water from the jail would run-off and be retained in the area to the west of the building. The enlarged planting strip would collect rain water. Water would run off the roof into gutters and out into a depressed wetland planting. It would filter through soil, sand, filter fabric, then would be held in a gravel storage area. Water then would be slowly released into the storm pipe.





# Plants for Water Infiltration Area



## Scientific Name

## Common Name

### Grasses, Sedges, and Rushes

*Carex frankii* (1)

*Carex hystericina*

*Carex normalis*

*Carex stipata*

*Carex tribuloides*

*Carex vulpinoidea*

*Eleocharis palustris* (2)

*Elymus virginicus* (3)

*Juncus effusus* (4)

*Juncus torreyi*

*Leersia oryzoides*

Frank's Sedge

Porcupine Sedge

Spreading Oval Sedge

Stalk Grain Sedge

Blunt Broom Sedge

Fox Sedge

Creeping Spikrush

Virginia Wild Rye

Soft Rush

Torrey's Rush

Rice Cut Grass

### Forbs

*Alisma subcordatum*

*Bidens cernua*

*Euthamia graminifolia* (5)

*Gentiana andrewsii*

*Iris virginica shrevei*

*Lobelia siphilitica* (6)

*Ludwigia alternifolia*

*Lycopus americanus* (7)

*Mimulus ringens*

*Penthorum sedoides*

*Pycnanthemum virginianum*

(8)

*Rudbeckia fulgida* (9)

*Sagittaria latifolia* (10)

*Zizia aurea*

Water Plantain

Nodding Bur Marigold

Flat-top Fragrant Goldenrod

Fringe-top Bottle Gentian

Blue Flag Iris

Great Blue Lobelia

Bushy Seedbox

American Bugleweed

Monkey Flower

Ditch Stonecrop

Mountain Mint

Showy Black-eyed Susan

Broad-leaf Arrowhead

Golden Alexanders

### Temporary Cover Grasses

*Agrostis alba*

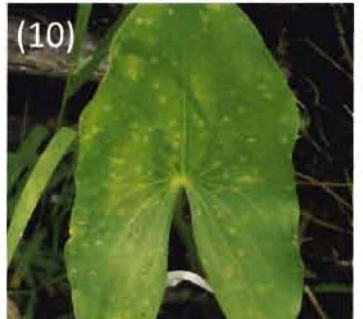
*Agrostis alba palustris*

*Avena sativa*

Redtop

Creeping Bent Grass

Seed Oats



Photos and Plant List from EarthSourceInc.net



# Urban Parking Lot

## 2. Courthouse Plaza

This parking lot across the street from the courthouse is an example of how parking in downtown could be handled in an aesthetically pleasing way that fits with the historic feel of Portland. This plan could be implemented in different parking lots around the city to unify the space between buildings and create a cohesive look in the town.

This lot design would bring a vertical edge to the parking lot to continue the verticality of the building facades.

The street trees listed below suit urban environments and can tolerate the urban stresses of salt, wind, heat and extreme water conditions.

### Street Trees

Hedge Maple, *Acer campestre*

European Hornbeam, Ironwood, *Carpinus betulus*

Thornless Honeylocust, *Gleditsia triacanthos* var.

*inermis*

Kentucky Coffeetree, *Gymnocladus dioica*

Goldenraintree, *Koeleruteria paniculata*

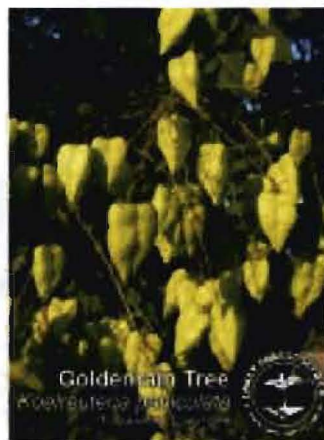
London Plane Tree, *Platanus X acerifolia*

Littleleaf Linden, *Tilia cordata*

### Grasses

Little Bluestem, *Schizachyrium scoparium*

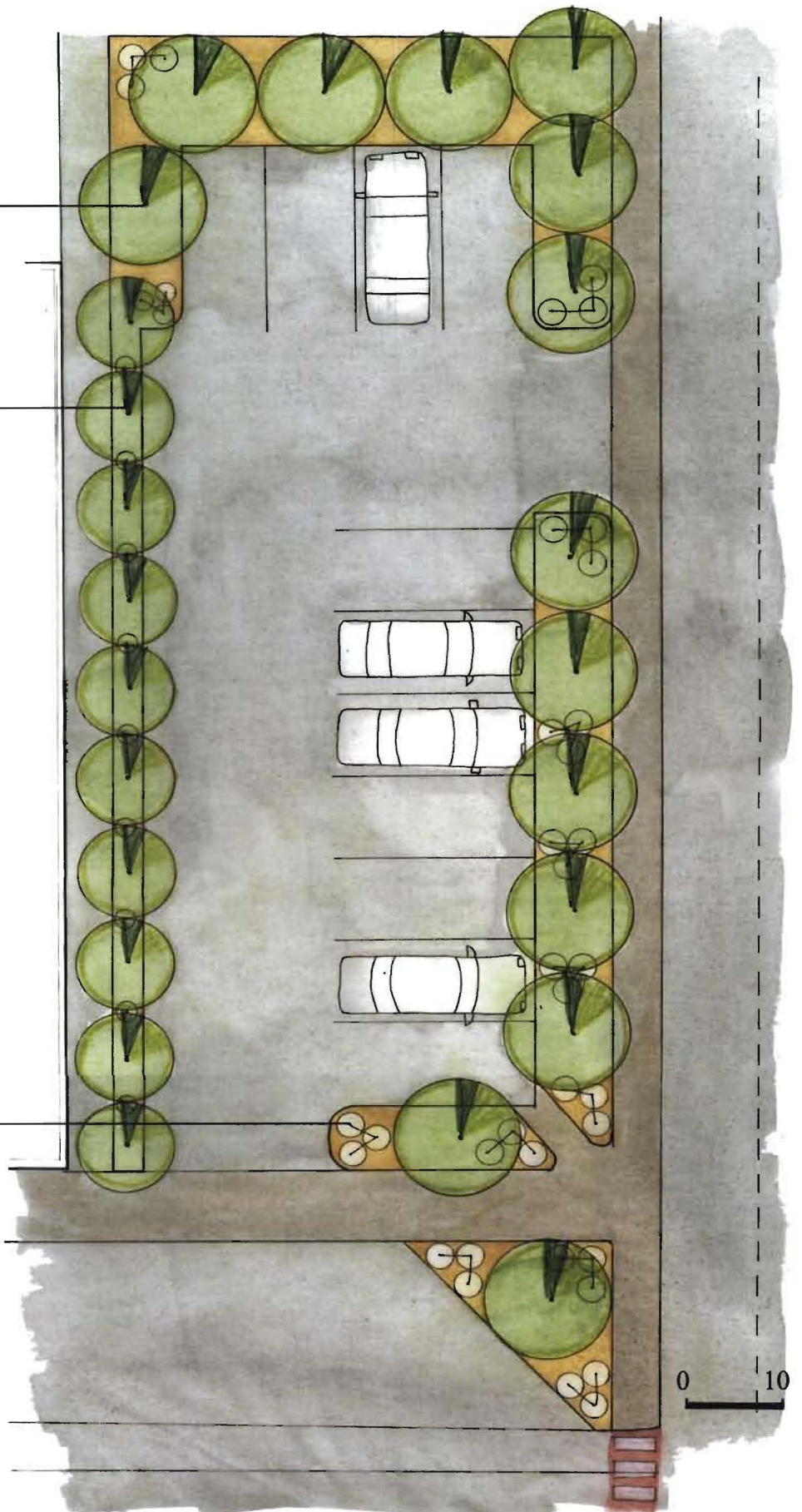
Side Oats Grama, *Bouteloua curtipendula*



Hedge Maple  
European  
Hornbeam  
(alternating)

Littleleaf Linden (typ.)

Side Oats Grama (typ.)





# Conclusion

## Potential Outdoor Café at Main and Ship



The potential for an active downtown in Portland, Indiana is great. The rich history and vibrant culture could provide a meaningful destination for visitors. Visitors coming for popular events would be able to see that Portland is more than a typical county seat. It is a town with a park system that connects the historic buildings with appropriate streets and landscapes to celebrate the culture and history of the architecture.

This will add to the existing traditions bringing new tradition of outdoor activity and park use. This proposal offers suggestions of how to achieve a healthy community atmosphere and healthy

## Potential of Festivals in Courthouse Plaza



community members with aesthetically pleasing design that enhances the historic character of downtown Portland, Indiana.

# Appendix A

## Timeline

	January	February	March	April	May
Develop a Problem Statement					
Topic Development					
Review of Literature					
Draft Proposal					
Revise Proposal					
Final Revisions					
Site Visit					
Interview Community members					
Obtain Base drawings					
Find and meet with advisor					
Site Inventory and Analysis					
Concept Development					
Design Development					
<b>Mid-semester Presentation</b>					
Design Refinement					
Production					
Presentation Board Production					
Presentation Preparation					
Presentation					
Party!					



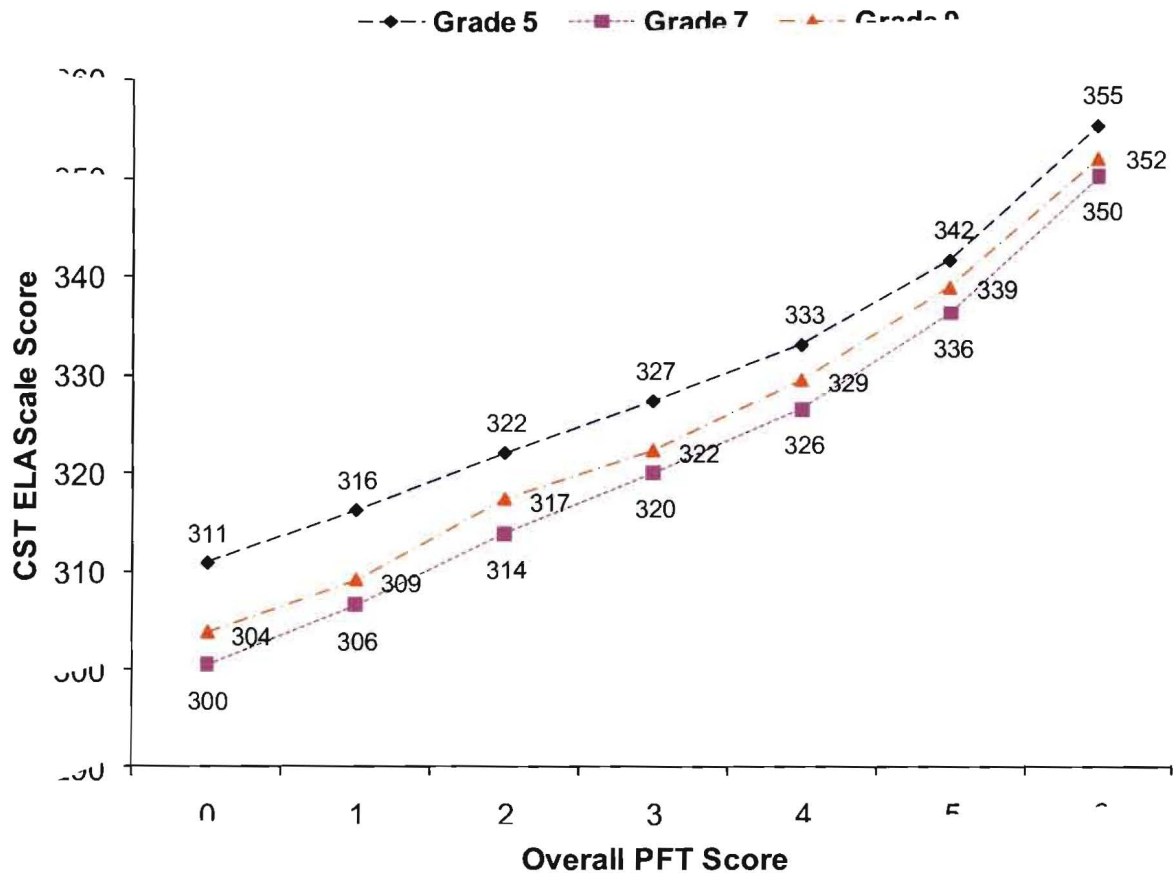
# Appendix B

## Questions for Interviews with community members

- Where do your customers park? Where do you want them to park?
- What are positive aspects of Meridian Street?
- What are negative aspects of Meridian Street?
- What would you like to see on Meridian?
- What do you know about Downtown Façade Funding?
- What is above you on the 2<sup>nd</sup> (3<sup>rd</sup>) floor?
- What would be necessary to make it into a loft or apartment?
- How long have you lived in Portland?
- What has kept you here?
- What do you want me to know about Portland?
- What is Portland's best asset?
- What brings people to live in Portland?
- What brings people to visit Portland?
- What would attract more people to the town?
- What would be your main focus of development in the historic district downtown?
- What is the biggest asset of the historic district?
- What does Portland need?
- What do you want to see in the revitalization of Meridian and Main Streets?
- What has been your experience with Portland downtown development?
- What opportunities do the John Jay Center for Learning bring to the town?
- If you were to characterize Portland in a phrase what would that phrase be?

# Appendix C

## "A Study of the Relationship Between Physical Fitness and Academic Achievement in California Using 2004 Test Results"



The X Axis, the Overall PFT Score, is the score of the physical fitness test for each child. This is compared to the CST ELA Scale Score, on the Y Axis, which is the standardized test for students in California. The positive correlation is evident, showing that as the fitness test scores increase, the scholastic score increase as well.



# Appendix D

## County Comparisons

### Jay County, IN (Portland)

#### **Food Environment Statistics**

Number of grocery stores: 3

Number of supercenters and club stores: 1

Number of convenience stores (with gas): 9

Number of full-service restaurants: 18

Adult diabetes rate: 9%

Adult obesity rate: 30%

Low-income preschool obesity rate: 14%

### Franklin County, TN (Winchester)

#### **Food Environment Statistics**

Number of grocery stores: 11

Number of supercenters and club stores: 1

Number of convenience stores (with gas): 27

Number of full-service restaurants: 21

Adult diabetes rate: 11%

Adult obesity rate: 30%

Low-income preschool obesity rate: 15%

Read more: <http://www.city-data.com/city/Portland-Indiana.html#ixzz15f2iCgF>

# Appendix E

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